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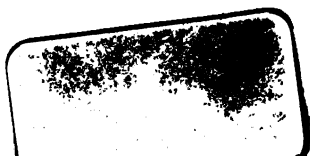
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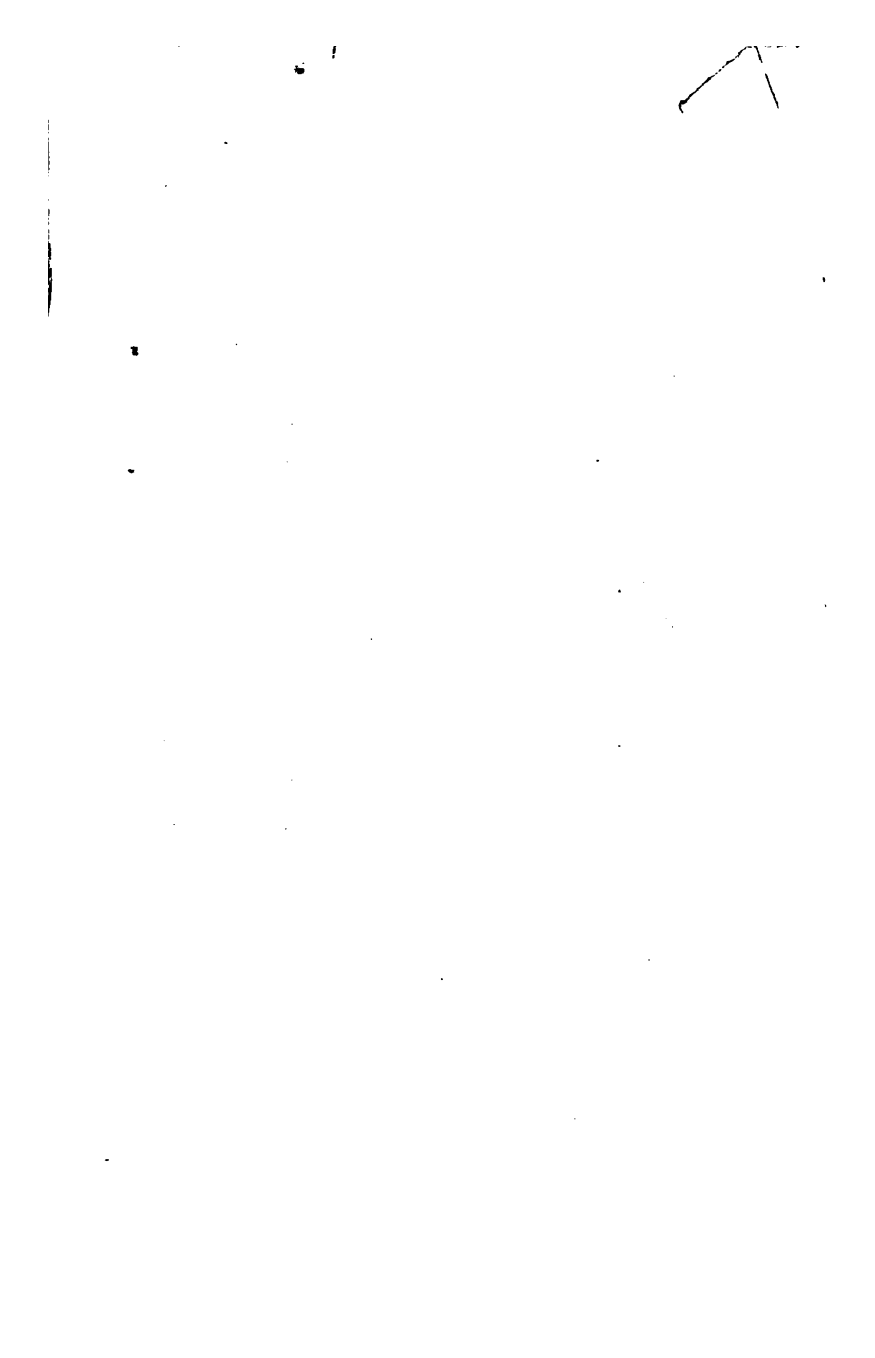
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At Home.
A Book for
Young
Ladies.



600070315M











The silent, resistless influence of home and the affections—this is woman's true glory. She should make home and the fireside a quiet sanctuary for less favoured ones, whose hearts would otherwise be hardened and seared by constant intercourse with the world.—
Page 76.

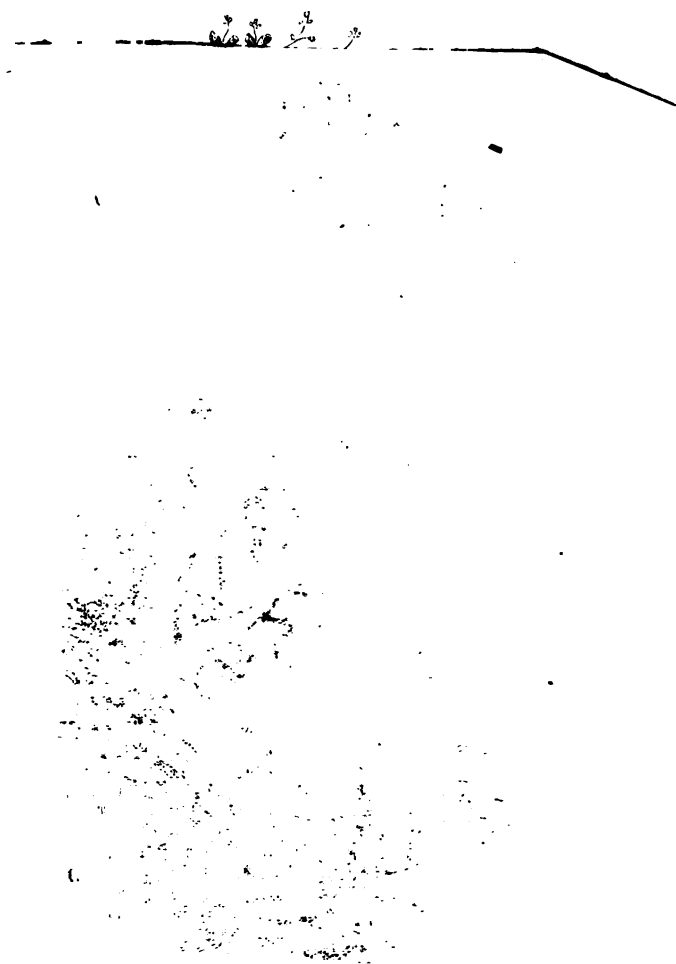


FIG. 1. ON A. — PASSERION AND L. ON A.

Home.

A Book for Young Ladies.



T. NELSON AND SONS, LONDON AND EDINBURGH.



H O M E: .

A BOOK FOR YOUNG LADIES.

BY

Mrs. Louisa C. Cuthill.



" A traveller betwixt life and death ;
The reason firm, the temperate will,
Endurance, foresight, strength, and skill,
A perfect woman, nobly planned
To warn, to comfort, and command ;
And yet a spirit still, and bright,
With something of an angel light."

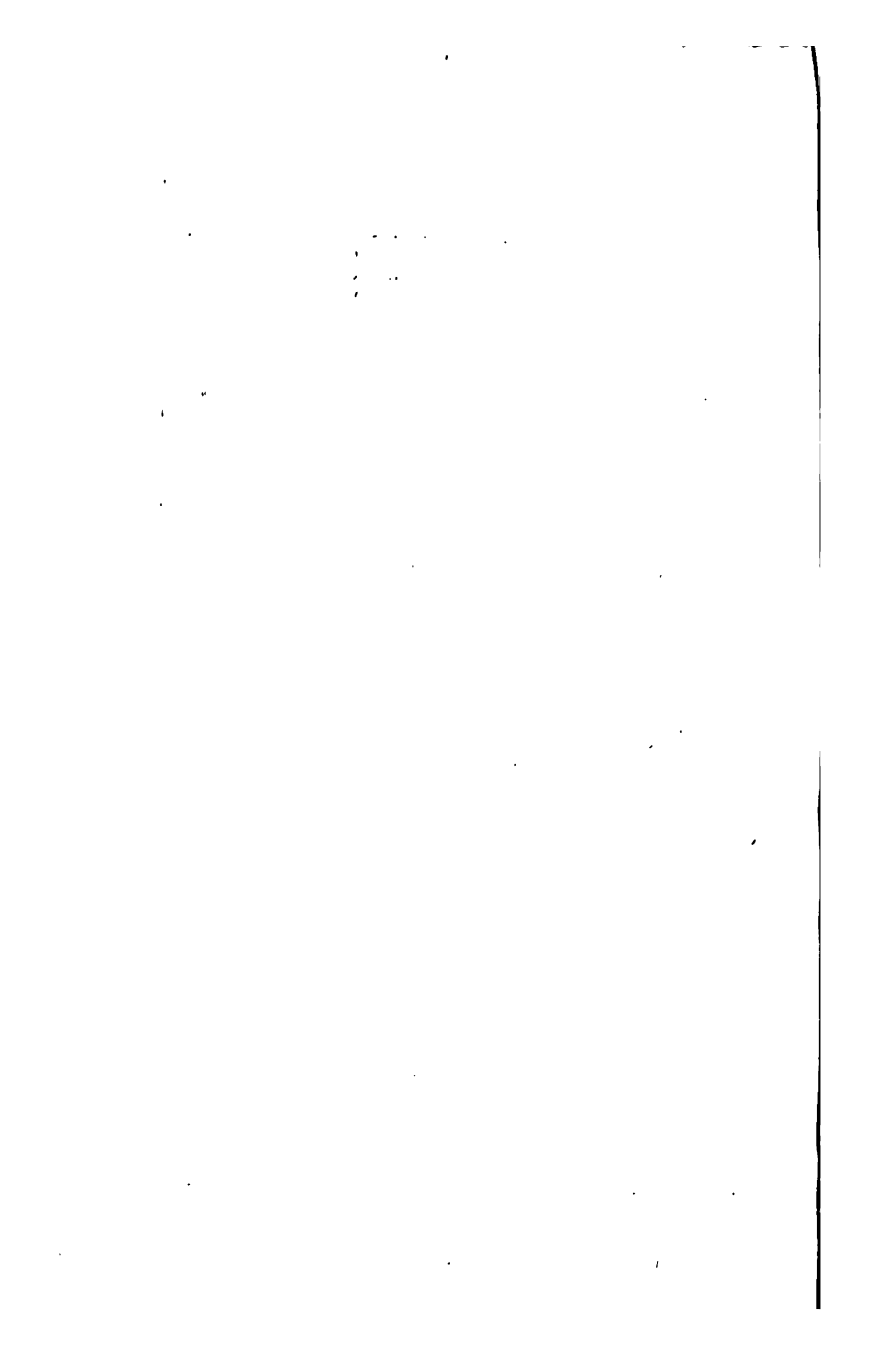
WORDSWORTH

LONDON:

T. NELSON AND SONS, PATERNOSTER ROW;
AND EDINBURGH.

MCCCLIII.

270. c. 356.



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INTRODUCTION.

LEAVING SCHOOL.

"Up springs, at every step, to claim a tear,
Some little friendship formed and cherished here;
And not the lightest leaf, but trembling teems
With golden visions and romantic dreams."

ISABELLA, CLARA, GERALDINE

SCENE.—A room, with dresses, bonnets, books, music, &c., scattered about in dire confusion; the three young ladies employed in packing their travelling-boxes and portmanteaus.

Isabella. Home! home! Done with school for ever! Delightful! Is it not, girls, perfectly delightful to be free as air? I will not carry home these hateful, humdrum books. They take up too much room. How many bitter tears they have cost me! I hope never to see their ugly faces again.

Clara. But, Isabella, are you going to give up study entirely? What will you do with yourself when you get home?

Isabella. Make the most of my little self—create a sensation—make a dashing *début*. You know I am eighteen, and I am *coming out* as soon as I get home. Clara Wilton, that reproving look does not become you,

dear ! You have toiled for the gold medal, and have gained it. What good will it do you, pray ?

Clara. Isabella, I value a good education for its own sake. The medal may testify to my parents that I have appreciated the advantages they have generously bestowed. I shall give it to my mother.

Isabella. Well, my parents do not care a sou about all these sober studies that Goody Blue has bored us with ; they know it gives one a sort of reputation to be educated by Mrs. Z., so here I have been these four years. They expect me to *come out* with *éclat*, and I do mean to produce a wonderful sensation. I believe I shall throw the rest of these books overboard to-day, on my way home, just out of spite for the trouble they have given me.

Geraldine. I shall be half-inclined to join you, for I do not know what good they will ever do me. What use shall I ever make of mathematics and philosophy ?

Clara. You will not find them useless ; you may be disposed to resume them by yourself, after you have been home a while.

Geraldine. *J'en doute.* I am going abroad with my father and mother, to finish my education. We shall reside a year or two in Paris, and I shall come home *parfaitement Française.*

Clara. *Parfaitement Française,* to reside in this country, and be a good, useful woman too !

Geraldine (laughing). A good, useful woman ! How that sounds to "ears polite ;" absolutely vulgar. I seek for something more *recherché*, more elegant than that. I go abroad to obtain that *retenue*, that *abandon*

of manner, that cannot be acquired in this half-civilized land.

Isabella. And to be laughed at for your *abandon*, as you call it, which will sound very droll to French "ears polite."

Geraldine. That is another object in going to Paris, to acquire a true Parisian accent. I shall not venture to speak in foreign society until I have had a master some months. When I return, two years hence, you shall have no occasion to laugh at my French.

Isabella. The French are so ridiculous they are enough to make a milestone laugh. What are you going to do, Clara?

Clara. I expect to continue my studies, that I may more perfectly understand them. I hope to be useful to my mother, who has kindly promised to teach me domestic economy; so long as life lasts, there will be knowledge to which I have not attained, virtues to be perfected, and good to be done; "vulgar" as it sounds, my highest aim is to be a good, useful woman.

Isabella. Spoken like our old country schoolmistress herself! Pity you could not have mounted her high cap and green spectacles for the occasion. Really, she never made a better address in her life.

Clara. Well, girls, be merry if you will at my sober notions, but let us part kindly; we may never meet again.

Geraldine. You will both write me, will you not?

Clara. I will, with pleasure, if you will let me know your father's foreign address before you go.

Isabella. I doubt if I shall have time to write to

any one. I have formed a thousand plans for next winter. I am still to have a music-master, and must practise at least three hours a-day, or I shall never rival the Hamiltons and the Moores, who, papa writes me, play so exquisitely that all the world are in love with them. Here comes an Atlas in the midst of my music-books, like a clown in genteel society; stay where you are, I am not going to take you to town with your betters. Shall I put up my French Testament? No; I'll make you a present of it, Clara, and one of these days you may give it, with my compliments, to—you know who—that ministerial personage who often glides before your imagination.

Clara. That personage is all in your own imagination, Isabella; but I thank you for the gift, and if I ever have the opportunity, shall present it, with your compliments, if you will promise to officiate as bride's-maid on that occasion.

Isabella. Delightful! I shall come, unless I am led to the hymeneal altar before you.

Geraldine. Invite me too, Clara; I shall perhaps have just returned from abroad.

Clara. And will then be, I fear, *un peu trop Française.*

Geraldine (coldly). *C'est possible.*

HOME:

A BOOK FOR YOUNG LADIES.

CHAPTER I.

FORMATION OF CHARACTER.

"Reason frowns on him who wastes that reflection on a destiny independent of him, which he ought to reserve for actions of which he is master."—SIR JAMES MACKINTOSH.

WHEN a young man has finished his collegiate course of education, he enters immediately upon the study of the profession, or into the business, which he is to pursue. He looks forward with eager anticipation to the time when his name shall be honoured among his fellow-men, or his coffers overflow with wealth, or when he shall be the messenger of mercy, and win many from the error of their ways. His course of study, also, is plainly marked out. He does not waste time in the choice of a pursuit, for his natural talents, the habitual bias of his mind, or the wishes of friends, have already decided the question.

It is otherwise with a young lady. Having passed through the usual studies at school, in a desultory manner—generally too desultory to produce a disciplined, well-balanced mind—she considers her education *finished*, or continues it without any special object in view.

Perhaps, my young friends, you have been absent for years from the home of your childhood ; its gayer visions have flitted away ; life begins to assume a sober reality. Casting a mournful glance of retrospection, you inquire : Of what value is the little knowledge acquired, if I go no farther ! Like an armoury in time of peace, arranged with much attempt at display, it seems brilliant and useless. You have, indeed, been collecting the weapons for life's warfare ; their temper is not yet tried, but the strife has already begun.

This is the season for castle-building. How fascinating the rainbow visions that flit before a vivid imagination, yet how dangerous the indulgence ! Exhausted with these wanderings wild, lassitude and ennui succeed.

Fancy enervates, while it soothes the heart,
And, while it dazzles, wounds the mental sight ;
To joy each heightening charm it can impart,
But gives to sorrow's hour a tenfold night."

As their only resource, many young ladies in town rush with eagerness into society, drowning reflection in the all-absorbing career of fashionable gaiety, and filling up its brief intervals with novel-reading. They whose homes are in the country are disgusted with this "working-day world," and its plain, good folks. Their refined education has unfitted them for cordial companionship with their friends and neighbours, whose useful common sense they cannot appreciate, and whose virtues, unadorned by the graces of polished life, they cannot admire. Too often, making no effort to settle themselves to the employments that should now devolve upon them, they live in a world of their own creation, or find one equally well fitted to their taste in the contents of the nearest circulating library.

Instead of wasting this precious period in fascinating dreams of future happiness, in enervating idleness, or unsatisfying gaiety, let me urge upon you, my young readers, the importance of the present golden moments. Sheltered beneath the paternal roof, guarded from outward evil by the vigilance of love, the perplexing cares and

overwhelming anxieties of life are not yet yours. You now enjoy the best possible opportunity to gain a knowledge of yourself, your disposition, habits, prejudices, purposes, acquirements, deficiencies, and principles. Much may have been done for you by parents and teachers; the strength of the foundation they have laid will be tested by the superstructure, which must be built by yourself. Cheerfully, then, commence that self-education, without which all other education is comparatively useless. Shrink not from your high responsibilities: He who has encompassed you with them will give you strength for their fulfilment. Has He not showered benefits upon you with unsparing hand? Your country, is it not a blessed one? Parents, kindred, friends, talents, and the means for improving them—competence, wealth—does not your heart overflow with gratitude to the Giver of all these good things? Even now, he grants you that quiet home, where you may prepare yourself for another, with more tender affections and more solemn responsibilities, and for another still beyond, and not very far distant—a home in heaven.

Woman's lot may be deemed a lowly one, by those who look not into the deeper mysteries of human life; who know not the silent, resistless influences that mould the intellectual and moral character of mankind. But Woman's lot is a high and holy one; and she "who fulfils the conditions required by conscience, takes the surest way of answering the purposes of Providence." Conscientiously and cheerfully, then, go on with your own education, mental, physical, and moral.

CHAPTER II.

MENTAL CULTURE

"Past and future are the wings,
On whose support, harmoniously conjoined,
Moves the great spirit of human knowledge."

WORDSWORTH.

THE traveller, resting for a moment upon a commanding eminence, views with interest the ground he has already passed over. The sunny hills and green vales still smile upon him; the rugged pathways, the fearful precipices, the deep rivers, are lessened to insignificance in the distance; the road seems short and easy; and taking courage from past success, he presses onward with cheerful hope and renewed energy.

Thus, my young friends, let us take a review of the past, and seeing what progress you have already made, find encouragement for new efforts and unfaltering perseverance.

You have been taught in several difficult sciences. After the usual course of elementary studies, you have perhaps pursued, to some extent, the mathematics. You have often wondered, while puzzling over a proposition in geometry, or a problem in arithmetic or algebra, what possible advantage you could derive from them: if you have no mathematical genius, the task was borne with little patience. The direct advantage you may never perceive; for if you go abroad, you will not measure Alpine heights, or if you stay at home, you will not calculate eclipses; but indirectly you will be benefited through life, by that increase of power in mind itself which this study has undoubtedly produced.

If it has unfortunately happened, through your own negligence, or that of your instructors, that your mind wants discipline, it is by no means too late to remedy the defect. If you have leisure which no other duty imperiously de-

mands, go through the first six books of Euclid's Geometry, by yourself, if possible; if not, with the aid of a friend or teacher. What you submit to at first as a task, may soon become a source of pleasure; whenever it does so, the point is gained; you have learned to fix the attention, and to reason with clearness and precision.

Mental philosophy. Doubtless this has proved an agreeable study; if only learned, however, from a meagre class-book, it is not sufficient. Read Stewart's Philosophy, and make a careful analysis of it. Let me recommend another very useful little work, now somewhat out of fashion—Watts on the Mind. This still retains its place in some seminaries, but in general has been supplanted by more recent publications. Your main object at this time must be, to acquire a knowledge of your own mind, its capabilities and wants. Make a thorough investigation, take its "gauge and dimensions."

Acuteness of sensation and quickness of perception depend originally to some extent upon organization; yet these may be greatly increased, and even their want supplied, as we see in the case of the blind, whose other senses become so vigilant and discriminating. Attention, close, habitual attention, stimulated by necessity, thus increases the blind man's sense of hearing, of touch, and even of smell and taste. Attention is a faculty much under the control of the will; upon its careful cultivation the conceptive faculty, the memory, and the judgment, all depend. To ascertain whether this faculty has been favourably developed, we must inquire what are our habits of reading, of study, and of thought.

The hasty, indiscriminating perusal of the host of annuals, scrap-books, and periodicals that crowd the centre-table of the modern drawing-room, not only vitiates taste, but is destructive to attention. A literary souvenir may be taken up during a morning call, if your friend keep you waiting half an hour or more, while she makes her elaborate toilet, and if your habits of attention are good, the time will not be entirely lost; an engraving, or a flower, may afford a

subject for attention and reflection, and even well-chosen furniture and its neat and tasteful arrangement may give you a lesson in housekeeping. To the well-regulated mind no time nor place can be destitute of suggestive objects for profitable thought. But to return to reading. Does your mind fix with a firm grasp upon every leading thought? Can you become so completely absorbed as to be unconscious, page after page, whether you are in the body or out of the body? And this, not in the entrancing pages of a novel alone, but in history or philosophy. Or do you revel in fairy-land, while your eyes glide over the pages without conveying a single idea to the mind? The story has often been told of the mischievous wag, who moved back from day to day his friend's mark in the book he was reading. The poor fellow, opening honestly at the mark each day, read over and over the same pages, till at length, a gleam of recollection coming over his mind, he exclaimed—"Well, it really seems to me, as if, somehow, I must have read this before."

In a moral point of view, attention to what is passing around us is a duty. How often may we deceive others in matters of consequence, if we walk blindfolded through the world! How complicated, how perplexed, is the narrative of a heedless person, even when he is describing an event of which he has been an eye-witness! It is next to impossible for such an one to carry on a clear, consecutive train of thought. Truth is often violated, or, at least, the veracity of conversation is doubtful, where this defect exists in a high degree. Like the dubious man described by Cowper—

" His evidence, if he were called by law
To swear to some enormity he saw,
For want of prominence and just relief,
Would hang an honest man, and save the thief.
Useless in him alike both brain and speech,
Fate having placed all truth above his reach:
His ambiguities his total sum,
He might as well be blind, and deaf, and dumb."

The faculty of attention is often impaired for life by

habitual reverie. When you are employed with your needle, fair reader, you are often building *châteaux d'Espagne*, and may think it hard to be denied the delicious enjoyment. The trifling mechanical employment of the fingers is a gentle promoter of thought, and many an hour may pass most profitably to mind in this manner, if your thoughts are rightly directed. Recall some book that you have studied; analyze it; compare it with whatever else you may have read on the same subject. Or take some subject of practical moment—contentment, for example; arrange in order all the reasons you have for it, count over the rich blessings that cluster around you, until your heart overflows with gratitude.

Attention, we know, must form the basis of memory; difference of taste and sentiment produces difference of association of ideas.

Three young ladies may have studied the history of the reign of Queen Elizabeth. The manners, dress, and fashion of those days interested the first; the second dwelt with delight upon the character of the men of genius who immortalized that reign; while the third was most attracted by the character and conduct of Elizabeth herself. Some one asks in their presence, "Will the reign of Victoria rival that of Elizabeth?" The picture before the mind's eye of the first is the chivalric cavalier, with silken suit and embroidered cloak, bowing to his lady-love, who rejoiceth in broad ruff and stiff brocade, assailing her heart with euphuistic compliment. The second asks, Where is the Burleigh to guide the counsels, or the Spenser and the Shakspeare to glorify this reign? The third immediately draws a parallel between the education and early character of the royal ladies. So far all is well; each follows her taste, but her attention has probably been too exclusively fixed upon her favourite subjects. The first, when asked about Sir Anthony Cooke and his daughters, does not remember that such persons existed. The second might laugh outright, if asked how Elizabeth was apparelled, and how many dresses she had in her wardrobe at the time of

her death. The third, if asked how the Spanish Armada was arranged for battle, remembers nothing in connection with it, excepting the royal heroine riding down the ranks at Tilbury Fort, and haranguing the soldiers. If your attention has been thus despotically ruled by your peculiar tastes and partialities, it is high time to correct the error. Read first the preface, and then glance over the index of a book, to know what are the topics of most practical value; what knowledge it contains of which you are ignorant; what information that you ought to be most anxious to fix in memory. Mark such subjects with your pencil, and in the course of reading rivet your attention upon them.

Absence of mind has been so long considered a mark of genius, that few take pains to avoid the pernicious habit. It is one of the infirmities of great minds, and is almost unpardonable, even when associated with the overpowering splendour of superior talents. It is no positive proof of genius; the weakest minds are prone to extreme absence. This is very different from the power of abstraction, which belongs, in a pre-eminent degree, only to minds of the highest order. It is peculiarly inconvenient for women to be absent-minded. The thousand and one daily cares and employments, which must each receive due attention in a well-ordered household, render it necessary for a woman to have her thoughts always about her. Suppose, at the head of her dinner-table, she falls into a fit of absence; her guests are neglected, the servants are at fault, and make dozens of blunders in consequence of hers, and when at last she comes back again, she resumes the conversation where it had been dropped, ten minutes before, much to the amusement or embarrassment of her guests, and her own and her husband's mortification. An absent-minded woman cannot be uniformly polite. She may be kindly disposed and perfectly well-bred, yet she will pass her most intimate friend in the street without speaking to her; take the most convenient and comfortable seat at a neighbour's fireside, appropriated to an aged and infirm member of the family, fix her eyes in church upon some one until the person is

annoyed and embarrassed; interrupt conversation by remarks entirely irrelevant, and commit many other blunders while under this temporary alienation of mind, which would shock her, at another time, as offending against the plainest rules of propriety.

CHAPTER III.

MEMORY.

"When I plant a choice flower in a fertile soil, I see nature presently thrust up with it the stinging nettle, the poisonous hemlock, the drowsy poppy, and many such noisome weeds, which will either choke my plant, by excluding the sun, or divert its nourishment to themselves; but if I weed these at first, my flower thrives to its goodness and glory."—WARWICK.

MEMORY, glorious treasure-house of mind! Earth, with all its pageantry, shall pass away, but memory shall survive, endless source of bliss or woe. We cannot realize the full import of this truth; if we could, very different would be our pursuits.

Locke says: "Memory is of so great moment, that where it is wanting all the rest of our faculties are in a great measure useless; and we, in our thoughts, reasonings, and knowledge, could not proceed beyond present objects, were it not for the assistance of memory, wherein there may be two defects. First, that it loses the idea quite, and so far it produces perfect ignorance. Secondly, that it moves slowly, and retrieves not the ideas that it has, and are laid up in store, quick enough to serve the mind upon occasions. This, if it be in a great degree, is stupidity; and he who, through this default in his memory, has not the ideas that are really preserved there, ready at hand when need and occasion call for them, were almost as well without them, since they serve him to very little purpose."

The vague ideas in a weak mind are at best "the baseless fabric of a vision," and time's effacing finger soon obliterates

them. In order that an idea should be retained, it is necessary that the attention should be fixed upon it, and the conception of it perfect. We are not aware how many of the thoughts of others, that we have laboured to fix in our minds, passed rapidly away because we did not perfectly understand them. The conception of them was incomplete, yet, as we had the shadow of an idea, we were satisfied; it was too much trouble to examine it thoroughly until it assumed a definite form, and would thus have retained a permanent place in the memory. Instructors cannot know whether children perfectly comprehend what they learn. We probably all remember having recited lessons very glibly, and having received the commendations of our teacher, when we knew no more of the true meaning of the lesson than if it had been in Hebrew. You are now old enough to be emancipated from the rote-system—that thralldom of mind which enchains all its faculties, and so weakens them that for a long time they cannot act with natural energy.

Minds of much quickness and vivacity are prone to take ideas in this vague, confused manner, and all their knowledge, while they do so, will be superficial. They should check their too rapid thoughts until they become distinct and true, and patiently go over a subject until they are certain the conception of it is complete.

Stewart tells us, the qualities of a good memory are *susceptibility, retentiveness, and readiness*.

By the first, he means easiness of impression: as the wax yields to the signet, so should the mind take the perfect impress of every subject; but not like the wax, which so easily melts away, leaving not a trace; the mind should retain its images like sculptor's marble, and, moreover, should be quick to produce them when they are needed.

Classification is a powerful auxiliary to memory. In a well-ordered mind, every new fact is immediately referred to its proper place, just as in botany a newly discovered plant is set down in its class and order; and, if the genus is already known, it forms a new species under it. If you

once acquire the habit of placing every idea in its category, a chain will be formed over which memory will pass like electricity along a conducting wire.

Look into your own mind, and see if everything lies there in a heterogeneous mass. It may appear, at first sight, as does this terrene sphere to uninquisitive ignorance: a mass of rough materials, thrown together without order or arrangement. The scientific geologist reduces the whole to order. He discovers the regular strata of rocks covering the globe, and demonstrates the uniformity of the series, from the imperishable granite to the crumbling sandstone upon its surface. Lay down first principles as the granite foundation upon which you are to build the whole superstructure of knowledge.

Habits of correct association of ideas aid memory. It is not our intention to go into the depths of mental philosophy, but only to suggest a few practical hints, in simple language, that you may be induced to pursue the subject much farther.

Ideas are so associated in the mind, that the presence of one suggests another.

The associations in common, uninstructed minds, are those of time and place, resemblance and contrast. The following couplet of Swift's may serve as an illustration of the first; similar examples, from Shakspeare, and other familiar authors, will undoubtedly occur to your minds.

"Yea," says the steward, "I remember when I was at my Lady Shrewsbury's, Such a thing as this happened, *just about the time of gooseberries!*"

More philosophical associations are those of *cause and effect, premises and conclusion, genus and species, &c.*

To assist memory, and to form a habit of philosophical association, it is of use to arrange a Mnemonica, or commonplace-book, and to write down under the separate divisions what you most wish to retain. All knowledge may be said to consist of **FACTS, SENTIMENTS, and PRINCIPLES**; and this may furnish a simple classification for such a Mnemonica. Divide a blank book into three parts, reserving one-half or

two-thirds for the first part, and divide the remainder equally for the two after parts.

I. FACTS.

Allow two or three pages under this division for each of the following subdivisions, namely,—

1. RELIGIOUS.
2. POLITICAL.
3. LITERARY.
4. SCIENTIFIC.
5. PRACTICAL.
6. MILITARY.
7. NAVAL.

II. PRINCIPLES.

1. AXIOMS.
2. GENERAL TRUTHS.
3. CAUSE, OR ORIGIN.
4. ELEMENTS, OR CONSTITUENT PARTS.

III. SENTIMENTS.

1. RELIGIOUS.
2. MORAL.
3. POETICAL.

Each of these may be extended much farther.

Such a Mnemonica will be found very useful ; but do not rely too much and too long upon it. Memory is like a true friend—the more you confide in her the better she serves you.

Various systems of artificial memory have been invented, but they are of doubtful utility. It is far better to form habits of correct classification, than to depend upon the arbitrary and often ridiculous associations of systems of mnemonics. Feinagle's system has been one of the most celebrated. The foundation of it is in *locality*, or the association of place. He divides a room into compartments: sides, ceiling, and floor, are each subdivided into nine parts. In order to remember a series of words, they are put in the several squares or places, and the recollection of them is assisted by associating some idea of relation between the objects and their situation ; and, as we find by experience

that whatever is ludicrous is calculated to make a strong impression upon the mind, the more ridiculous the association the better. To illustrate this idea, Mr. Feinagle places the names of certain sensible objects in the different compartments, and connects the ideas of their images by some story, so as to make it almost impossible to forget the order in which they are arranged. But all this complicated apparatus is first to be fixed in the memory. In the first square you have a pump, perhaps; in the second, a monkey; in the third, a fool's cap, and so on. If you wish to remember a sermon, enter into your mnemonical room—hang the first division of the discourse upon the pump-handle, place the second on the monkey's head, and the third in the fool's cap. By these arbitrary and ludicrous associations you are to fix them in memory. Surely there can be no real utility in such an absurd system.

The memory of words and the memory of ideas are very different. Numerous instances of wonderful memory of the first kind are given. Seneca, in his youth, could repeat two thousand words, in their order, after hearing them once. Joseph Scaliger could repeat the contents of whole books in foreign languages. Klopstock, the German poet, when a boy at school, could recite the whole of Homer's *Iliad*. An Englishman once came to Frederick the Great of Prussia, for the purpose of giving him some specimens of his extraordinary memory. Frederick sent for Voltaire, who read to his Majesty a pretty long poem, which he had just finished. The Englishman was concealed in such a manner as to be able to hear every word that was said. When Voltaire had concluded, Frederick remarked that a foreign gentleman would immediately repeat the same poem to him, and therefore it could not be original. Voltaire listened with astonishment to the stranger's declamation, and then fell into a great rage and tore the manuscript in pieces. When Frederick informed him of his mistake, the Englishman again dictated to Voltaire the whole poem, with perfect correctness!

It is impossible for us now to discover whether these

efforts were owing to a naturally strong memory, which had been habitually exercised, or to artificial memory ; but most probably to the former.

The memory of events and of ideas may be good, when that of words is very defective. Both should be cultivated in due proportion. It is better to enrich the memory with a fine sentiment, or a beautiful piece of poetry, than to doom it to banishment in your portfolio, which is, generally, only one way of consigning it to oblivion.

It has been often asserted, that a very superior memory is seldom found in connection with invention, or with uncommon judgment. A memory of words may not be ; but that which depends upon powerful conception, or philosophical arrangement, may be very tenacious of ideas, even where there is genius of the highest order, or the most consummate judgment.

Maria Gaetana Agnesi, a lady of extraordinary genius and most extensive acquirements, was born at Milan, on the 15th of May 1718. Her father, Pietro Agnesi, of Milan, was royal feudatory of Montevaglia and its dependencies ; and being a man of some rank and consequence, he was disposed, from paternal affection, to provide suitably for the education of his infant daughter, who gave the most striking indications of talent. From her tenderest years she discovered a wonderful aptness and a vehement desire for acquiring languages. Under the direction of proper masters, she studied at the very same time the Latin and Greek, the French and German ; and while the rapidity of her progress excited universal astonishment, such were the *prodigious powers of her memory*, that she could easily pursue these diversified objects without feeling the smallest degree of confusion. When yet scarcely nine years old, this surprising child delivered a Latin oration, to prove that the cultivation of letters is not inconsistent with the female character, before an assembly of learned persons, invited to her father's house.

At the age of eleven, the young Agnesi could not only read Greek, and translate it instantly into Latin, but could even speak that refined language, and with the same ease

and fluency as if it had been her native tongue. Nor did these acquisitions absorb her whole attention ; a nobler field was opened to the exercise of her mental faculties. She now began to read Euclid's Elements, and proceeded in algebra as far as quadratic equations. Thus prepared, she advanced with ardour to the study of natural philosophy ; but, not content with the sober truths there unfolded, she soared to the heights of metaphysics, and engaged in the most abstruse and intricate disquisitions of that contentious science.

After the young lady had attained the age of fourteen, her father, anxious to second her ardour for improvement, and willing to gratify her ambition for literary distinction, invited occasionally to his house a number of persons, the most respectable in Milan by their rank and learning. In the midst of this grave auditory, Donna Agnesi made her appearance, and without resigning the native delicacy of her sex, she maintained a new thesis on various difficult parts of philosophy, and handled the arguments with such dexterity and commanding eloquence, as singly to vanquish every opponent that entered the field of controversy. These disputations were carried on, all of them, in the Latin language, which she spoke with the utmost ease, purity, and copious elegance. Everything conspired to heighten the impression produced on the admiring spectators. In the full bloom of youth, her person agreeable, her manner graceful, an air of gentleness and modesty gave irresistible charms to her whole demeanour.

Such, for several years, was the great theatre of her glory. But having nearly completed the circle of philosophy, and exhausted the chief topics of discussion, she resolved at length to close that career with a solemnity suitable to the occasion. In the year 1738, at the age of twenty, Agnesi made her last brilliant display before an august assembly, composed of the most learned and illustrious of the Milanese nobility, the senators and foreign ministers, with the most distinguished professors in all the branches of science and literature. The substance of these philosophical conferences was afterwards published in a quarto volume, in Latin.

Agnesi now bent her whole attention to the culture of mathematics; and without guide or assistance, she composed a very useful commentary on L'Hospital's Conic Sections, which is said still to exist in manuscript. In the sublimer departments of that science, her studies were directed by the matured experience of Rampinelli, Professor of Mathematics in the University of Pisa; but she soon gave proofs of her amazing proficiency in digesting a complete body of the modern calculus. This excellent work, entitled, "Analytical Institutions for the Use of the Italian Youth," appeared in 1748, in two volumes, quarto, and was highly esteemed by the judges, and justly regarded as exhibiting the fullest and clearest views of the state of the science at that period. She was, in consequence, elected by acclamation a member of the Institute of Science of Bologna; and the Pope farther conferred on her the title of Professor of Mathematics in the university of that city.

But Agnesi was already sated with literary fame. That sun which in its ascent had shone forth with such dazzling radiance, was, through the rest of its course, shrouded in clouds and darkness. The fever of genius had preyed on her mind, and the high fit of excitement was quickly succeeded by a hopeless depression of spirits. She repelled the seductions of human learning, and abandoned for ever her favourite mathematical pursuits. Renouncing the vanities of this world, she withdrew from society, embraced a life of religious seclusion, and sunk by degrees into the languor of religious melancholy. She studied nothing but Hebrew, and the rhapsodies of the Greek fathers of the Church. For upwards of twenty years she denied all access to strangers. Indulging that gloomy temper, she retired into a convent, and assumed the habit of a nun. She sought to forget the world, and was herself forgotten.

"And what, alas! is human fame
To woman's heart? A cold, vain word,
Impalpable as air—a name
For feeling blighted, hope deferred,
Visions o'ershaded, thoughts that steal
The secrets of the heart away;

For all that lofty souls may feel
When, in their prison-house of clay,
They half reveal their holier light,
And cast abroad the splendour given
To burn but in the Giver's sight,
Upon the altar-shrine of heaven."

Let us hope that Maria Agnesi, with her wonderful talents, was not left without the consolations of true religion. Let us believe, that during that long and gloomy seclusion, there were occasional bright revealings of a world of purity and happiness, and that her clear and comprehensive mind, though shackled by a false and erring creed, shook off at last its trammels, and rejoiced in the glorious liberty of a true follower of Jesus Christ.

To this bright but melancholy example of genius, we add one from our own age, far more lovely and attractive, and worthier of imitation—one "early loved, and early lost;" whose memory has been embalmed in a sweet memorial, written by a lady, her intimate friend. The close of her life furnishes a striking contrast to that of the gifted Maria Agnesi.

"Hers was a mind entirely unlike that of common characters, peculiarly individual in its nature. It was a clear, vigorous, and well-balanced mind. There was great maturity, independence, and discrimination, in her habits of thought; and an enlargement of views, that led her to examine a subject in all its bearings.

"She had true poetic genius, and early manifested it. The world in which her imagination lived was altogether a different place from that inhabited by common minds, for it was peopled with the bright and beautiful creations of her own genius.

"But, notwithstanding her poetic temperament, she applied herself closely to study, and made high and various attainments. And she preferred those studies that taxed her powers to the utmost, and required the deepest reflection.

"Some have supposed that she studied so hard as to injure her health; her friends consider this a mistake.

She almost invariably exercised great judgment and discretion in regard to the amount of time she devoted to study. She did not spend so great a proportion of each day in study as many scholars do; but she had an uncommon power of abstraction, and when she studied, she applied herself to it closely and in earnest.

“She never entertained that absurd notion, which is too prevalent among young ladies, that her education was completed when she left school. She felt then that she had taken only the first step in the pursuit of knowledge, and saw before her with delight—

‘The varied fields of science, ever new,
Opening, and wider opening to the view;’

and she went on, through life, with unwearied perseverance in the acquisition of valuable knowledge. Mathematics and mental philosophy were decidedly her favourite early studies. In mathematics she had pursued a very thorough course through trigonometry. In mental philosophy she had studied with care the works of Stewart and Brown, and in the latter part of her life, Edwards on the Will, and some of the works of Coleridge. From the last mentioned author she thought she derived much more benefit than from either of the others. But her study of mental philosophy did not consist merely in collecting various opinions and theories from books. It was rather deep and patient thought, enlivened occasionally by an animated discussion of difficult points with some intimate friend.

“She had a good knowledge of Latin, and had read numerous authors in that language. Those who are best qualified to judge, spoke of her knowledge of Greek as being considerable. She had studied with great interest a part of the works of Xenophon, Homer, and Plato, and parts of the Greek New Testament. She read French with great ease. During the last few months of her life, she acquired some knowledge of German, and was greatly interested in and delighted with this language. She said, in a letter to a friend, written shortly after she commenced the study—‘I

do not know why it is, but the German words are completely fixed in my memory. Indeed, there is something in the German that fastens itself upon the mind strangely.'

"She occasionally had some doubts in regard to the utility of her studies; and, once or twice, thought of giving them up partially or entirely.

"These scruples soon vanished. She thus writes to her friend: 'You will smile when I tell you that I have commenced studying again, with great zeal. I have discovered one thing, at least: that is, that some hard study, every day, is absolutely necessary for my health; and while I study Phædo and the Tusculan Questions, I think my conscience will not trouble me any more on that score. The more I read Plato and Cicero, the more I am convinced that I may study them with profit.'

"In another letter she writes:—'I lately met with a sentiment, in a piece of Dana's, which I know will delight you; at least if you dwell upon it a moment or two, for its most obvious meaning is not the most striking: "Religion ought to be the home of our thoughts." Is it not beautiful? How like the sweet soothing feelings, which fill our hearts when we return to our homes, are those which steal upon us with the thoughts of the love and mercy of our Almighty Father! There is rest and peace for the weary mind, and balm and warmth for the chilled and wounded affections.' It was but a few weeks after she wrote this, that she went to dwell for ever among the invisible realities that had long been the home of her thoughts.

'So should we live, that every hour
May die as dies the natural flower—
A self-reviving thing of power;

That every thought and every deed
May hold within itself the seed
Of future good and future need.'"

CHAPTER IV.

IMAGINATION.

"Not willingly in his presence would I behold the sun setting behind our mountains, or listen to a tale of distress or virtue; I should be ashamed of the quiet tear on my own cheek."—COLERIDGE.

THE word Imagination has been perverted from its true signification, and used in various others. In common parlance, it stands for memory and for conception. For example: "I cannot imagine what you said to me yesterday," for, "I cannot remember." "I have not seen my most intimate friend for a year, and cannot imagine how she looks," meaning, "I cannot conceive," &c. We say, too, when we are lost in thought, that something occupies our imagination, when it is in fact an act of reflection. Metaphysicians describe imagination as that power of the mind which is exerted in the selection and formation of new combinations of ideas. When we summon at will any particular class of ideas, it is sometimes called Fancy. A *creative imagination* must have the aid of conception, judgment, abstraction, and taste. It is the power which inspires the poet, the historical painter, and the landscape gardener. To enjoy and appreciate the efforts of their genius, we must possess no inconsiderable degree of imagination.

The poet may give to "airy nothings a local habitation and a name;" but if his reader has neither conception nor imagination, they remain in his mind "things invisible."

The painter's delineation of passion, or of noble and virtuous sentiments brought into action, may strike the sight agreeably, but calls forth no throb of sympathy where there is no imagination. Neither will the beautiful wood, the velvet lawn, the limpid river with its sparkling cascade, the secluded hermitage, the more classic temple and gray ruin, when combined, by the skill of the artist, in imitation

of living landscape, affect an ordinary mind, destitute of imagination, more than any other combination of earth, wood, and water.

"A primrose on the river's brim,
A yellow primrose is to him,
And it is nothing more."

But the absence or weakness of imagination affects not the taste alone; it may exert a potent influence upon the moral character.

Sensibility depends chiefly upon imagination.

Watch the effect produced by the reading of Shakspeare's Lear upon two young ladies of different character. Observe the quivering lip, the moistening eye, the trembling voice of one, while that master-spirit reveals Regan and Goneril's filial ingratitude and cruelty, and the faithful Cordelia's simple and tender affection. See the other turn a cold, dull eye of wonder upon her friend who is thus moved, or curl her lip in scorn at what she deems weakness or affectation.

Some of the coldness and selfishness existing in the world have been traced by philosophy to a want of imagination. She who steps over the low threshold of poverty, and takes her seat by the humble bed of sickness, without one gleam of imagination to reveal the deep and hidden miseries of the sufferer who lies there, cannot offer sympathy so true and acceptable, as one whose imagination at once portrays all the gloomy accompaniments of poverty and woe, and by a natural transition makes herself the sufferer. The latter may smooth the pillow with a more trembling hand, and present the healing cup with less firmness; but the thrilling voice of kindness, and the beautiful glow of sympathetic tenderness, find their ready way to the sufferer's heart. In this case we suppose, of course, that sensibility is under the control of right reason. The one whose heart is thus softened will make greater sacrifices of personal comfort and convenience than the less imaginative one, who, because she cannot conceive of suffering, and cannot, by any possibility, place herself in the same situation, remains unmoved and comparatively selfish. We are to

suppose, in this case, that they are both governed by principle, and that the desire to do good has brought them both to the home of poverty.

Imagination is a powerful incentive to virtue; it exalts the standard of excellence, enlarges the sphere of benevolent action, and vividly depicts the glories of a future state of reward. It thus gives wings to that faith which is "the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen."

Who doubts that Howard, by his solitary fireside, often called up those pictures of misery, the bolts, chains, and dungeons of incarcerated men, until he was led to minister to their wants and woes? Or that the missionary has often portrayed the miseries of those "who sit in darkness," until he resolves to venture life itself to bear to them the light of truth? Or that the servant and soldier of Christ, who has contemplated the character of St. Paul until he has formed a perfect conception of it, would be warmed in zeal, and stimulated to action, by imagining Paul surrounded by his own duties and responsibilities?

Imagination often leads to trustfulness of disposition and warmth of friendship. The bright side of character presents itself, embellished with hues of the mind's creation. Virtues cluster around the loved, and transform them from the weakness of human nature to an ideal perfection. A distinguished female writer of our own times says: "I never met in real life, nor ever read in tale or history, of any woman, distinguished for intellect of the highest order, who was not also remarkable for this trustingness of spirit, this hopefulness and cheerfulness of temper, which is compatible with the most serious habits of thought, and the most profound sensibility."

But we are compelled to acknowledge that the noble power of imagination is often uncontrolled by reason, especially in the female mind.

An ill-regulated imagination produces in some too great exhilaration and too ardent expectations, while in others it gives birth to morbid sensibility and causeless melancholy.

If all objects are to you illuminated by the dazzling tints of fancy, it seems cruel to rob them of this fascinating charm. Yet the sober colouring of truth best suits the mental eye: it is like the refreshing green in which nature has clothed her fields and groves—it does not “dazzle to blind;” but a too vivid imagination, like the aurora borealis, throws upon all objects its beautiful but unnatural hue. You imagine yourself a heroine, and exult in your air-built castles; how can you descend to the homely realities of life? You picture a “sweet little isle of your own,” with all the means and appliances for happiness; how will this world of sober reality disgust you!

Perhaps you have already met with disappointment, and are sinking into a state of sickly sentimentalism. You sit at your window by moonlight, and sigh to the echoing breeze; you scribble a dolorous ode to her pale ladyship, complaining of the fickleness of friendship, the unsympathizing world, and the heart’s loneliness. Your pillow is nightly bedewed with tears; but for what, or for whom, it is impossible to tell. Your griefs flow from the wild and disjointed views of your situation, furnished by an ill-regulated imagination—combinations of circumstances such as never did, and never will, come within your own experience. Zimmerman tells us, that “the learned Molanus, having, during a course of many years, detached his mind from all objects of sense, neglected all seasonable and salutary diversion, and given an uncontrolled license to the imagination, fancied, in the latter part of his life, that he was a barleycorn; and although he received his friends with great courtesy and politeness, and conversed upon subjects both of science and devotion with great ease and ingenuity, he could never afterwards be persuaded to stir from home, lest, as he expressed his apprehension, he should be picked up in the streets and swallowed by a fowl!” This author adds: “The female mind is still more subject to these delusions of disordered fancy; for as their feelings are more exquisite, and their imaginations more active, than those of the other sex, solitude, when carried to excess, affects them

in a much greater degree." Beware, gentle reader; you are not much in danger of imagining yourself a barleycorn, but you may think yourself a heroine, and be picked up by some fool whom you fancy a hero. Pardon me; you will smile at your own follies, if you have not, indeed, occasion to deplore them, when sobered by coming years and the rough realities of life. To prevent imagination from leading you far from duty and happiness,—

1. Inquire earnestly what are the object and end of your existence. You will find they are too serious and momentous to allow you to dream away any part of life. A brief probation, involving the interests of eternity, demands all your energies.

2. Learn your true condition in life, and enter actively into its duties. Regular employment will give you a healthy tone of mind, as well as invigorate the body. Early rising and laborious occupation are admirable correctives to a disordered fancy.

3. Endeavour to relieve or to alleviate the sufferings which come within your reach. Instead of wasting your feelings upon fictitious sorrow, seek out that which is real, and be zealous in the ministry of consolation.

4. Read books of sound reasoning or sober fact; abjure novels, and deny yourself, for a time, the luxury of poetry of a sentimental character.

5. Cultivate and learn to value the society of people of plain, practical sense; they will teach you the folly of romantic expectations; by contrasting their cheerful contentment in an humble lot with your own wild reachings after ideal happiness, you may learn to extract comfort from your condition. The imagination and sensibility that are elementary constituents of poetical genius, often bring misery to their gifted possessor. Common sense is needed as a balance-wheel. But there may be some who have been so closely fastened down to matters of fact, that imagination has been entirely repressed. There is, however, little danger in youth of clipping too closely the wings of fancy. Carefully cultivate attention, conception, judgment, reason-

ing, and imagination will usually take care of itself. Still it is possible, that, either from education or from temperament, there may be but little imagination. If so, endeavour to soar a little in fancy-land. Read the Merchant of Venice. It is very far from being one of Shakspeare's most imaginative plays, and is on that very account better to begin with. Read it thrice; first for the story, then for the characters—especially that of Portia. Mrs. Jameson's splendid development of this character, in her Characteristics of Woman, will assist you to understand and appreciate it. Lastly, read it again for the poetry profusely scattered over it, and commit to memory some of the finest passages. Then read the Tempest. These will but introduce you into the vestibule, and prepare you for the glories of those most perfect creations of genius—the thrilling splendour of Macbeth, the deep pathos of Lear, and the all-searching philosophy of Hamlet. Milton's Comus you must admire—who can help it? and L'Allegro, and Il Penseroso, and, after a time, the Paradise Lost. You may think yourself happy if you have been denied the perusal of such works of fancy as some of the best of Sir Walter Scott's, until your judgment is matured; for now you can read them for their perfect delineations of human character. When read too early, they are apt to engender a taste for mere light and amusing reading, and must be very imperfectly understood. Joanna Baillie's splendid tragedies cannot fail to give pleasure to a cultivated mind, to improve the taste, and correct the imagination.

It would have been deemed unnecessary to say anything here of books that pollute the imagination, did they not abound in the land, and everywhere open their resplendently decorated pages to beguile and betray. No lady wishes to have her mind imbued with impure thoughts; she should, therefore, avoid many publications that are freely spoken of, even among those whose delicacy is deemed unquestionable. Never read a book without having first ascertained its character from some judicious friend; and never peruse one that you would not read aloud to your father or brother.

A pure imagination is a pearl of great price; dim not its lustre, sully not its purity. How holy should be that inner sanctuary of the soul, where none but God may enter!

CHAPTER V.

JUDGMENT.

"A traveller betwixt life and death;
The reason firm, the temperate will,
Endurance, foresight, strength, and skill."
WORDSWORTH.

It is not our intention to enter into a metaphysical discussion, or to decide upon the proper use of terms. Reason or judgment we wish to treat of practically, and we use the latter word in preference to the former, trusting that it will be perfectly understood.

It is a reproach often cast upon our sex, that we are either naturally deficient in the reasoning faculty, or, that it is so little cultivated in education as to remain very feeble. Is it so? "We hope better things of you." Woman, in being raised to the true dignity of her station by Christianity, has also been exalted to her proper rank as an intellectual being. Her "dark age" has long since passed away, and there are no inquisitions where you will be tried for witchcraft, though there are still some where, if you are "learned, wise, judicious," you may be pronounced a decided blue and a decided bore. But, as a profound yet elegant writer has remarked: "These things have, in a great measure, passed away. The prejudices that dishonoured the sex have yielded to the influence of truth. By slow but sure advances, education has extended itself to all ranks of female society. There is no longer any dread that the culture of science should foster that masculine boldness or restless independence, which alarms by its sallies, or wounds by its inconsistencies. We have seen that here, as everywhere else, knowledge is

favourable to human virtue and human happiness ; that the refinement of literature adds lustre to the devotion of piety ; that true learning, like true taste, is modest and unostentatious ; that grace of manners receives a higher polish from the discipline of the schools ; that cultivated genius sheds a cheering light over domestic duties, and its very sparkles, like those of the diamond, attest at once its power and its purity. There is not a rank of society, however high, which does not pay homage to literature, or that would not blush even at the suspicion of that ignorance which half a century ago was neither uncommon nor discreditable. There is not a parent, whose pride may not glow at the thought that his daughter's happiness is, in a great measure, within her own command, whether she keeps the cool sequestered vale of life, or visits the busy walks of fashion."

Your taste, your imagination, may be exquisite, my young friends ; but the objects upon which they are to be exercised are few, compared with those that will call for judgment. It is as important in the management of the domestic machinery, of which woman is the mainspring, as in the management of a state or army. "The reason firm" is the efficient cause of "the temperate will," ever ready to yield where obedience is due ; "foresight" to avoid the rocks and quicksands that hide themselves from the unwary ; "the strength" that lies in religious principle and self-respect, and "the skill" which extracts from life its balm, and renders woman indeed "a ministering angel."

You may think that your situation, under parental watchfulness, precludes the necessity for the exertion of much judgment. You may ever continue under the authority of another, but that need not prevent you from possessing independence of opinion, resulting from the clear conviction of a reasoning mind, from fixedness of purpose originating in the same source, and moral courage, that sure test of a strong mind.

1. Bring your accomplishments and employments under a strict scrutiny. Are they such as to strengthen the judgment from day to day ? Does the morning find you reason-

ing upon the best disposal of time, and the evening lead you to a close survey of the manner in which it has been spent!

2. Some directions have already been anticipated in the chapter on imagination, especially with regard to reading. Your mind will be invigorated by the perusal and re-perusal of Butler's Analogy, and M'Cosh on the Divine Government. A few good books, faithfully perused, will strengthen the judgment more than a cursory glance at a whole library.

3. Do not think it a mark of judgment to despise the appropriate duties of woman. The pursuits of your school-days may have given you habits of study incompatible with the present demands upon your time. The true excellence of your education will now be tested. If you can practise cheerful self-denial, in yielding up for a time your own tastes and pleasures, and learning with readiness many things in domestic economy, as useful, but less agreeable, than your former pursuits, you have acquired something of the art of self-government. In amusing your younger brothers and sisters, you may exercise judgment as well as good-nature. Good sense may be shown about trifles, and not wasted upon them either. Dr. Johnson used to say of Mrs. Elizabeth Carter, "that she could make a pudding as well as translate Epictetus from the Greek, and hem a handkerchief as well as compose a poem."

4. Read Mason on Self-knowledge, and write out the divisions in a little note-book. Try yourself by that standard, and mark everything in which you find yourself deficient. It will be a good moral as well as intellectual exercise.

5. Endeavour to think consecutively and clearly on every subject. That hastiness and impatience of mind which results from a lively and sanguine temperament, must be carefully guarded against, as well as that indolence which perpetually haunts a quiet and easy disposition. Neither of these will sift the motives of conduct, reason from facts to principles, or enter into a minute investigation of causes and effects.

6. Examine whether you perfectly understand all the words which you employ in conversation and in writing; whether you have full, clear, distinct, and accurate ideas on the subjects with which you are most familiar. It is wonderful how we skim over the surface, just dipping here and there, without ever going down to bring up the pearls that lie in deep water. This is in consequence of a want of due cultivation of the conceptive faculty in early education. This has not been dwelt upon at length here, as it belongs more properly to an earlier period. It was the duty of those who had the charge of the early development of your mind, to know whether you had clear conceptions; perhaps they neglected it; if so, you have serious obstacles to encounter. The first step now is to ascertain the fact; the next, to remedy it as far as lies in your power. Whenever you discover that you do not perfectly understand anything, be diligent and patient in inquiry, until the idea is perfect in your mind. By the application of concentrated thought, many ideas that have been but floating, vague shadows, will assume fixed and definite form.

Experience should effect changes, and must, with all rational beings, produce innovations; they are the result of its lessons. It should implant enlarged charity where bigotry lurked before, should exchange presumption for humility, rashness for caution, precipitance for habits of investigation, and passion for reason.

CHAPTER VI.

HISTORY.

"And he whose heart is weary of the strife
Of meaner spirits, and whose mental gaze
Would shun the dull, cold littleness of life,
Awhile to dwell amidst sublimer days,
Must turn to thee."

MRS. HEMANS.

HISTORY is the scroll of time—the mighty record of the transactions of man, in all ages and climes. It tells of the foundations of empires—their progress from the first outlines marked out by the ploughshare, to that exalted pitch of grandeur which calls forth wonder and admiration. It shows what constituted their true glory and happiness, and the causes of their decline and fall.

History makes us acquainted with the great and good of all nations, and the great and bad, for

"Les grands crimes immortalisent
Ainsi que les grandes vertus;"

thus stimulating by example to virtue and warning against error.

The laws, genius, customs, manners of mankind, history reveals—furnishing to all coming ages the principles of government and the maxims of civil society.

From history we acquire a knowledge of the progress of the arts, science, and literature of every age and country, from the first rude hut of a savage, to the glorious Parthenon; from the first idea of numbers, to Newton's Principia; from the rude minstrel's strain, to Milton's Paradise Lost.

History proclaims the power, the wisdom, and the justice of the Almighty, and proves that He who created still controls this world as its Sovereign Lord.

History may be read for amusement. Facts are always agreeable to the human mind; "if any moral feeling be

instinctive, it is respect for truth." The little works of fiction, which too often constitute the first intellectual food, would lose half their value with children, if they suspected they were not true. Let it not be supposed that we would on this account prohibit all works of fiction at that early age. They often inculcate lessons of wisdom, and furnish bright examples of moral excellence, which may be of lasting benefit; they sometimes afford to those of riper years that knowledge of refined and elegant society, which cannot be gained in any other way. But tales and romances often induce a disrelish for history; which to the reflecting and philosophic mind furnishes a rich fund of intellectual enjoyment.

The study of history strengthens the judgment. The observation and experience of every individual must be limited; we see only minute parts of the great whole, even when interesting events pass before our own eyes. "The immortal hero of three revolutions," although an actor in soul-stirring events that would fill many folios, could not relate from his own experience what history will unfold to future ages. The collected testimony of many witnesses must make up the whole train of causes, with their results. The impression made upon the mind by passing events is more vivid, but the knowledge we derive from authentic history is more correct; because, seeing them at a distance, we have neither the partiality of an actor, nor the prejudices of an eyewitness. The close study of character, and the investigation into causes and effects, increase discrimination and invigorate the judgment.

The knowledge that we gain from history is various and important. But, in order to make the knowledge thus acquired of any real value, it must be made the subject of mature reflection. We should have a specific object in view in reading a particular history; name this object or subject, and make it a leading one. For example:—

The causes that have advanced religious liberty.

The progress of civil liberty.

The influence of laws and government upon national character.

The gradual improvement in the useful arts
 The progress of the fine arts.
 The evils of war.
 The influence of literature upon the character of the age.
 The misery occasioned by daring and sinful ambition.
 The influence of Christianity upon national prosperity.
 The influence of women.

All these subjects may come under cognizance in reading the history of a single period; but to give clearness and precision to our ideas, and to methodize what we read, a leading subject may thus be taken, and, after finishing a book, an abstract of all the knowledge gained on this particular subject may be written in your Mnemonica, in its proper place. This will serve as a chain to bind the whole together.

Geography, ancient and modern, it is presumed, has been sufficiently studied at school; yet maps should be always used in reading history.

Some remarkable eras should be chosen, and imprinted in the memory, as landmarks in chronology. The intervening events may be placed in their order, and thus save the memory from being burdened. For example:—

	B. C.
The creation of the world,	4004
The deluge,	2348
Astronomical observations begun at Babylon,	2284
The Chaldean monarchy founded,	2221
The kingdom of Egypt commences,	2188
Abraham born,	1996
Joseph sold into Egypt,	1728
Sparta built,	1718
Cecrop settled in Attica,	1582
Moses born,	1571
Athens founded,	1556
Tyre built,	1252
The Trojan war begun,	1174
Solomon began to build the temple,	1012
Lycurgus, the Spartan lawgiver, born,	926
Rome founded,	753
Death of Isaiah, the prophet,	696
Cyrus conquered and terminated the kingdom of Babylon,	538
Xerxes began his expedition against Greece,	481
Malachi, the last of the prophets,	436
Socrates, the Grecian philosopher, flourished,	429
Philip of Macedon defeated the Greeks at Cheronæa,	336

	B. C.
Alexander the Great died,	323
Silver first coined at Rome,	269
Hannibal passed the Alps,	218
Carthage destroyed,	146
Julius Cæsar born,	100
Cæsar killed in the Senate-house,	44
Antony and Cleopatra's death,	30
Rome at the meridian of its glory, under Augustus Cæsar, ...	19
The birth of our Saviour, Jesus Christ, four years before the common era, termed <i>Anno Domini</i> .	

If these dates are not numerous enough, a larger selection might be made; these, surely, can be perfectly committed to memory. Sacred and profane history are here mingled as they should be; the events recorded in the Bible are too apt to be disconnected in the mind from all others—to stand apart, as if they belonged to some other world.

A chronological table of the same kind should be made out for modern history. It is better for each one of you to select the events for yourself, and their number will depend upon the confidence which you have in your own memory.

The general outlines of history being thus fixed immovably, separate portions may be read and referred to in their chronological order, without difficulty.

Most young ladies are ignorant of everything in Sacred History but a few leading characters. It should be taken up now, and read with the same attention that you would bestow upon a new study. Read it for the sake of fully appreciating its valuable treasures. Take separate portions for perusal; for example, the reign of David. Learn everything relative to the laws, conquests, mode of warfare, government, manners, arts, literature, customs, music, poetry, religion, of that memorable reign. Compare the condition of the Israelites with other nations at that period; compare it with their condition under the Judges. See if David, the "monarch minstrel," the warrior, the generous friend, the noble foe, will not bear a comparison with the brightest heroes of profane history. Read the wonderful reign of Solomon, and other portions, in the same manner. A rich fund of historical truth may thus be collected from the Old Testament.

It is presumed that young ladies become familiar at school with general history, ancient and modern, and they will now fill up the grand outlines as they have time and opportunity.

The history of our own country should be well understood. This is too often neglected. The wonderful achievements of "Macedonia's madman, and the Swede," the pomp of Eastern magnificence, the splendour of thrones and coronets, have dazzled the imagination, until the history of our own country seems tame and insipid.

In the best times of the Roman republic, an intimate acquaintance with the history of their own country was deemed requisite for all who expected to occupy elevated stations, or to administer public affairs; but in later times and more degenerate days, it was said that "they did not begin to read the history of their country till they were elevated to the highest offices of the state; they first obtained the employment, and then bethought themselves of qualifications necessary for the proper discharge of it." May this disgraceful reproach never be deserved by the young men of our country! May their sisters set them a noble example, by making the deeds and characters of the heroes of our native land as familiar as household words!

The history of our own country presents to the Christian and the philanthropist heart-stirring events, which need no false colouring to give them a thrilling interest. Specimens of moral excellence, equal to any the world has ever produced, adorn its annals, and the benign light of liberty and religion encircle it with a mild halo of glory.

The French introduced that kind of historical writing, which they termed *Memoirs*. For example: Sully's *Memoirs of the Reign of Henry the Fourth*. Numerous works of the same kind have appeared in English: Roscoe's *Lorenzo de Medici*, and *Leo the Tenth*; Watson's *Philip the Second and Third*; Miss Aikin's *Courts of Elizabeth and James*; Scott's *Napoleon*; Irving's *Columbus*; Prescott's *Ferdinand and Isabella*, and *Conquest of Mexico and Peru*;—all affording agreeable and profitable reading.

CHAPTER VII.

NATURAL SCIENCE.

"Such pleasures are pure and refined; they are congenial to the character of a rational being; they are more permanent than sensitive enjoyments; they afford solace in the hours of retirement from the bustle of business, and consolation amid the calamities and afflictions to which humanity is exposed."—DICK.

NATURAL science opens a wide field for study and recreation. The book of nature and the book of revelation, written by the same unerring finger, are in perfect and beautiful harmony, demonstrating the wisdom and goodness of the Almighty Creator.

Botany is a favourite science, and a very pleasant one for young ladies. The care of flowers is represented by Milton as not unworthy of Eve in her state of perfect innocence and bliss; he describes her—

"Vell'd in a cloud of fragrance, . .
 oft stooping to support
Each flower of tender stalk, whose head, though gay
Carnation, purple, azure, or specked with gold,
Hung drooping unsustained; then she upstays
Gently with myrtle band, mindless the while
Herself, though fairest unsupported flower,
From her best prop so far, and storm so nigh."

The nomenclature of this science is rather difficult to learn; but, that obstacle once overcome, all the rest is delightful, and many pleasing and highly attractive volumes have been prepared as guides to the popular student of this most interesting branch of science.

Mineralogy and geology will prove sources of high enjoyment to the lover of nature. The knowledge of these sciences is usually communicated through the medium of popular lectures. The specimens necessary to illustrate their study are seldom within reach of the retired reader; lectures, however, should not be deemed sufficient; they should be followed by a course of reading and observation.

Chemistry must be acquired in the same way, for the sake of the experiments ; but it is wrong to give up the study entirely the moment the impression of these splendid experiments has passed away ; many valuable hints in domestic economy have been given, which should be treasured up for future use ; the "manipulations" of a housekeeper will test their value.

Conchology and Entomology will furnish rational recreation, which may save you from hours of ennui, or redeem your time from gossip and folly.

Astronomy is a science whose sublimity exalts the mind, and whose variety gives infinite scope to the imagination. Its amazing truths reveal the power and wisdom of the Almighty Creator, and give us a faint glimpse of the magnificence of that light, unapproachable, where dwells the King eternal, immutable, and full of glory.

In all these branches of study, however, it cannot be too strongly impressed on the mind that the mere hearing of lectures, without personal study and reading, is nearly, if not altogether valueless ; and the more fully the student has stored her mind beforehand, the larger will be the amount of information that the lecturer will be able to communicate to her.

CHAPTER VIII.

ENGLISH LITERATURE.

"I have been four days confined to my chamber by a cold, which has already kept me from three plays, nine sales, five shows, and six card-tables, and put me seventeen visits behindhand ; and the doctor tells my mamma, that if I fret and cry, it will settle in my head, and I shall not be fit to be seen these six weeks."—RAMBLER.

A TASTE for reading is indeed a never-failing source of enjoyment. How many vacant hours of life would pass heavily away, were it not for the companionship of books !

During a course of school education, very little time can be devoted to miscellaneous reading. Many are the illustrious names stored up in memory, whose more intimate acquaintance is now to be sought. The long-wished period has arrived; but is it a season of leisure? Let the young lady who is out in society answer. Innumerable are the demands upon her time; like the belle quoted at the beginning of the chapter, she might say, "If at any time I can gain an hour by not being at home, I have so many things to do, so many alterations to make in my clothes, so many visitants' names to read over, so many invitations to accept or refuse, so many cards to write, so many fashions to consider, that I am lost in confusion. When shall I either stop my course, or so change it as to want a book?" If all young ladies had thus given themselves over to frivolity, we might write in vain. Some there are, we trust, who, abjuring such frivolities, find time for the improvement of the mind.

"The world has people of all sorts," says Locke; literature has books of all sorts, and how shall one know, among the infinite variety, what to choose, or where to begin?

The best writers in the English language should be known to every well-educated young lady. She will, of course, be able to read but a small portion of what they have written, yet she may by so doing become familiar with their style and sentiments; she may at least save herself from the blunders and perplexities into which she will inevitably fall, if ignorant of English classic literature. It happened one evening in the course of a little play, called *Characters*, among some young people, that the name of Pope was given. A very fashionably-educated young lady whispered to her next neighbour, "Pray tell me who they mean—the pope?" "No; A. Pope." "Why, which pope?—there have been thousands." "Not a Roman pontiff—our English Pope, the poet." "I never heard of such a man in my life; is he now living?" asked the young lady.

Some of the older English poets are now almost unintelligible, from their quaint phraseology and obsolete words. Chaucer and Surrey have been modernized; but there is

little before the Augustan age of English literature that affords much pleasure to the reader. In 1558, Elizabeth succeeded to the throne of Great Britain. "In this reign," says Campbell, "the English mind put forth its energies in every direction, exalted by a purer religion, and enlarged by new views of truth. This was an age of loyalty, adventure, and generous emulation. The chivalrous character was softened by intellectual pursuits, while the genius of chivalry itself still lingered, as if unwilling to depart, and paid his last homage to a warlike and female reign. A degree of romantic fancy remained in the manners and superstitions of the people; and allegory might be said to parade the streets in their public pageants and festivals. Quaint and pedantic as those allegorical exhibitions might often be, they were nevertheless more expressive of erudition, ingenuity, and moral meaning, than they had been in former times.

"The philosophy of the highest minds still partook of a visionary character. A poetical spirit infused itself into the practical heroism of the age; and some of the worthies of that period seem less like ordinary men, than beings called forth out of fiction, and arrayed in the brightness of her dreams. They had high thoughts seated in a heart of courtesy. The life of Sir Philip Sidney was poetry put into action."

That illustrious age furnished a constellation of genius, which will be conspicuous and brilliant in the hemisphere of literature to the end of time—Spenser, Sidney, Raleigh, Shakspeare, Jonson, Bacon. The last named was born in the reign of Elizabeth, as we may remember from his ready reply when the queen asked him his age: "Just two years younger than your Majesty's happy reign."

Edmund Spenser, the first in point of time in this reign, immortalized himself by his *Faery Queen*. It is an elaborate allegorical poem, of which only six of the original twelve books remain; the others are said to have been trusted to the care of a servant, who lost them on his passage from Ireland to England. The adventures of a knight

personifying a particular virtue, as Courtesy, Holiness, &c., occupy each book. Such a host of sentiments and ideas, also personified, attend the knight, that, although we acknowledge the unparalleled beauty of his fancy, the profusion bewilders. Queens, fairies, knights, dwarfs, and giants, acknowledge the enchanter's spell, and rise in gorgeous arms and apparel at the touch of his wand. Mountain and woodland, "plants both humble and tall," cottage and castle, fresh flowerets and lonely moss, forest or cavern and lovely lake, all glide before the mind like a moving panorama. Such exuberance of fancy belonged to that poet who has been called "the inspirer of Milton," less chaste and refined than his successor, but glowing with the fire of genius. Spenser was the friend of Sidney and Raleigh.

Sir Philip Sidney was the author of an incomplete romance, called *Arcadia*, which is now nearly obsolete. He was more distinguished for his conversation and his elegant manners, his bravery and noble heart, than for his writings, though they have been said to possess "fervour of eloquence" and "purity of thought."

Sir Walter Raleigh is associated in our minds with the colonization of Virginia, and is better known as a distinguished navigator, a soldier, an accomplished courtier, and an unfortunate one, than as a poet. During his long confinement in the Tower, he wrote many fugitive poems, and a prose work, entitled "*A History of the World*," which is now nearly forgotten.

Francis Bacon, Lord Chancellor of England, wrote upon law, history, the advancement of learning, and many other subjects. He established human knowledge upon a new and firm basis—facts, tested by experiment. His prose partakes of the figurative style of the age, though always clear and precise. A volume of *Essays*, which, to use his own words, "come home to men's business and bosoms," retains its place as a popular book in almost every library.

Shakspeare! for how many thousand volumes has this immortal name served as a text! "An overstrained enthu-

siasm, it has been said, is more pardonable than the want of it; for our admiration cannot easily surpass his genius." It was reserved for the German critic, Schlegel, and our own Coleridge, to give the best criticisms upon the plays of Shakspeare that had appeared. Mrs. Jameson has since thrown a new and brilliant light upon his heroines.

"Never, perhaps, was there so comprehensive a talent for the delineation of character, as Shakspeare's. It not only grasps the diversities of rank, sex, and age, down to the dawnings of infancy; not only do the king and the beggar, the hero and the pickpocket, the sage and the idiot, speak and act with equal truth; but it opens the gates of the magical world of spirits, calls up the midnight ghost, exhibits before us his witches amidst their unhallowed mysteries, peoples the air with sportive fairies and sylphs. We are lost in astonishment at seeing the extraordinary, the wonderful, and the unheard-of, in such intimate nearness."

"He gives a living picture of all the most minute and secret artifices by which a feeling steals into our souls; of all the imperceptible advantages which it there gains; of all the stratagems by which every other passion is made subservient to it, till it becomes the sole tyrant of our desires and our aversions. He has never varnished over wild and bloodthirsty passions with a pleasing exterior—never clothed crime and want of principle with a false show of greatness of soul."

The next name of note in English literature is Ben Jonson. His plays are far inferior to Shakspeare's, and his miscellaneous poems are now little known; the same may also be said of Massinger, and Beaumont and Fletcher, the other great dramatists of the Elizabethan age; yet of all these, specimens will continue to hold their places in collections of English poetry.

Jeremy Taylor may be considered as having added much to the literature of his country. He was born about the year 1600, and on the accession of Charles the Second was promoted to a bishopric. His "Holy Living," "Holy Dying," and many of his sermons, still hold their place as

favourites with the intelligent and serious. His works possess much originality, brilliant imagery, and all the vivid and glowing conceptions of poetry.

Like Sirius among the ever-during stars of night, shines the next name in England's coronet of genius. A critic, analyzing the character of Milton, says: "He has sublimity in the highest degree; beauty in an equal degree; pathos next to the highest; perfect character in the conception of Satan, Adam, and Eve; fancy, learning, vividness of description, stateliness, decorum. His style is elaborate and powerful; and his versification, with occasional harshness and affectation, is superior in harmony and variety to all other blank verse; it has the effect of a piece of fine music."

Next to Milton, in time, comes Dryden. His "Alexander's Feast" is still read as a lesson in elocution; but, generally, his works contain glaring defects, that render them unsuitable for young ladies. A poet of a later day has thus contrasted Milton and Dryden:—

"He that rode sublime
Upon the seraph wings of ecstasy,
The secrets of the abyas to spy.
He passed the flaming bounds of space and time;
The living throne, the sapphire blaze,
Where angels tremble while they gaze,
He saw, but, blasted with excess of light,
Closed his eyes in endless night.
Behold where Dryden's less presumptuous car
Wide o'er the fields of glory bear
Two coursers of ethereal race,
With necks in thunder clothed, and long resounding paces.
Hark! his hands the lyre explore!
Bright-eyed Fancy, hovering o'er,
Scatters from her pictured urn
Thoughts that breathe and words that burn."

Sir William Temple, Locke, Stillingfleet, and Tillotson, are among the elegant prose writers of the same period.

The old English writers, both in prose and verse, have been called from their retreats, and presented to modern eyes adorned with all the graces of elegant typography and splendid binding. No excuse can now be found for ignorance. Many names of lesser note also appear, mingled with

those of the first order, whose works will gratify curiosity and give abundant pleasure.

Another luminous period in English literature is adorned with the names of Pope, Addison, Steele, Swift, and a host of other writers: poets, philosophers, and statesmen, distinguished for genius, and still more for elegance of style. At this time the English language appears to have received its most perfect polish. Though it wanted the strength and spirit which characterized it at a former period, it was now adorned with all the grace and beauty of which it is perhaps susceptible.

Then follow Thomson, Collins, Shenstone, Akenside, Gray, Goldsmith, Johnson, Mrs. Chapone, Mrs. Elizabeth Carter, Sir Joshua Reynolds, Burke, &c., differing as "one star differs from another in glory," while uniting to shed a benign influence on every succeeding age.

Since then a new and higher race of poets has succeeded; including Cowper, Burns, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Southey, Scott, Byron, Shelley, Campbell, Moore, and others. Prose writers no less remarkable, have sustained the character of the age in every department of literature. In this later era of intellectual development Scotland has borne an honourable part, nor has America failed to contribute her share to the literature of the common language. The present century thus far has been a lustrous period, and will doubtless in subsequent times be called another golden age in literature, another era of genius and invention.

CHAPTER IX.

COMPOSITION.

"Books, paper, pencil, pen, and slate,
And columned scrolls of ancient date,
Before her lie, on which she looks
With searching glance, and gladly brooks
An irksome task."

JOANNA BAILLIE.

A LABOURED defence of woman's rights might do for the meridian of Constantinople. All the rights which she ought to claim are allowed in this free and happy country. Nor is there, it is to be hoped, much danger that she should overstep the bounds which modesty and delicacy prescribe, and come forward upon that arena of strife which ought to belong exclusively to man. All such encroachments should be frowned upon by an enlightened community, for "they foster that masculine boldness or restless independence, which alarms by its sallies or wounds by its inconsistencies." The bold and fearless spirit with which men enter on public discussion and controversy well becomes them, but it should excite our admiration without provoking to emulation. The paths that are open to us are many, but they lie along "the cool, sequestered vale." Such are the vicissitudes of life, that we need all the resources which can be accumulated. Few of you, my young friends, probably either expect or wish to become authoresses; but you all wish to enjoy the pleasures of literature, and will not deny the utility of being able to write a perspicuous and pleasing style. Were it only for the sake of those "winged messengers of love" despatched to absent friends, you need an agreeable vehicle of thought. Letters should never be carelessly written; the style may be easy and graceful, and at the same time show that care and attention which is a mark of respect to the person addressed. Even the folding and superscription of a letter tell something of the character of the writer, and the deference she deems due to her cor-

respondents. In early life we are not aware what insight to the character and feelings these trifles give, to those who have knowledge and experience. Far be it from you to cultivate the exterior graces alone; the respect and regard should be felt, of course, as well as the careful expression of it exhibited. A letter ought to be written in legible, neat, and, if possible, elegant handwriting; not that delicate cobweb scribble, which costs more to read than it is generally worth. When a letter is sent by a private conveyance, it should be folded in an envelope as neatly as possible. Fashion regulates the mode of sealing; sometimes a wafer is deemed almost an insult; the fastidious Chesterfield thought it so. The recent ingenious device of self-sealing envelopes happily combines most of the advantages of both. Sufficient attention should be paid, even in these seeming trifles, to know what is the custom of the day, and to follow it.

Many fine examples of the epistolary style are to be found in the English language. Miss More could lay aside her elaborate style, and all the pomp of diction which she could use on occasion, for the simple, playful language of confiding friendship. Some of her letters are delightful, and many of her learned correspondents have given fine specimens of easy, sprightly, and graceful letters. Charles Lamb's letters, for vivacity, warmth, and colloquial simplicity, are unrivalled, unless by those of the poet Cowper, wherein happy humour is so gracefully blended with fine Christian feeling and reflection. Sir Walter Scott's letters to Miss Baillie and other friends, are charming, though they deal less than we would wish in the domestic details which he could render so amusing. The letters of Franklin are so characteristic of the man as to be very amusing. They are written in the same concise and spirited style as his other writings, and ornamented with occasional flashes of wit and humour. Modern memoirs furnish many excellent examples of this kind of composition; so many, indeed, that it would be impossible here to name them. None of them however, should be imitated, as models; a letter, to be

agrecable, should be individual; that is, it should reflect exactly the author's mind.

In some seminaries for young ladies, it is customary to insist upon their writing poetry for a school exercise. O, the intolerable burden of counting out lines upon the fingers, and making them match to words from the rhyming dictionary! Doubtless, facility in versification may be thus acquired by long practice, where there is no natural ear for the harmony of numbers. The altar is built, the wood is laid, but where is the fire, and where the burnt-offering! Sentimental scribblers, puffed up with self-conceit, they are in danger of becoming; and it is difficult to conceive of any advantage to be derived from forcing, or endeavouring to create, a talent which has not been bestowed by the almighty Author of our being.

But should young ladies never write poetry? If they are poets born, they will write "by stealth, and blush to find it fame," not because it is wrong, but true genius and true sensibility are ever accompanied by modesty and a high standard of excellence. There is little danger to be apprehended from repressing the early exhibition of poetical talent; if it really exist, it will in time manifest itself. Let education be judiciously conducted, and the mind well-disciplined, and it will not extinguish the fire of genius, but (to use a homely comparison) find fuel for it to act upon.

Exercises in prose composition, often much disliked at school, are of acknowledged utility, and should not now be discontinued. Bacon says, "He seeth how they (his thoughts) look when turned into words." We seldom know whether we have thoughts on any particular subject until we endeavour to express them; and if we have, the expression gives to them more clearness and precision. Often when some idea seems beautiful as it floats vaguely in the mind, it is painful to find how all the beauty vanishes when it is "turned into words;" as the lovely vision of the painter's fancy often resists all his attempts to transfer it to canvass. That the conception was imperfect could be demonstrated as the most frequent cause of failure in composition.

Coleridge says, in one of his translations from Schiller—

“There exist
Few fit to rule themselves, but few that use
Their intellects intelligently.”

Some, perhaps, who feel that they are made for something better than mere followers of fashion, nevertheless suppress the aspirings of their nature, and strive to be like the fluttering myriads around them. Unworthy effort! you may for a time tame down your mind to dull mediocrity; but have you thus gained the good-will of those for whom you sacrifice so much? No; they, even they, would despise you for trampling under foot the glorious riches of genius. You may be unfavourably situated for the cultivation of mind, for it is “not possible for the best minds to attain their full development but amid an atmosphere highly charged with the electricity of thought;” yet, to the Giver you are accountable for all his gifts, and your means are proportioned to your responsibilities. Although every one is thus bound to use the talents that God has given, none need covet the possession of genius. Well might the gifted and truly feminine poetess Hemans exclaim—

“A mournful gift is mine, O friends!
A mournful gift is mine.”

Something might here be said of the importance of the study of grammar and philology. They fill so conspicuous a place in the modern system of school education, that it may be deemed unnecessary to recommend farther attention to them. The philosophy of language is seldom understood by the young, and you would doubtless derive much advantage from a thorough examination of this subject. Horne Tooke's *Diversions of Purley* afford amusement and profound knowledge on this subject; Campbell's *Rhetoric* is not generally employed as a class-book, and should by all means be attentively read, as should also Alison on *Taste*, and Burke on the *Sublime and Beautiful*.

As models of a pure and carefully elaborated prose style, few works are more worthy of study than Foster's *Essays*; and scarcely less fastidious was the great modern critic,

Lord Jeffrey, whose selected contributions from the Edinburgh Review include papers on questions of taste and literary criticism well suited for the study of ladies desirous of acquiring a correct and purely grammatical style.

CHAPTER X.

MODERN LANGUAGES.

"Frenche she spake ful faire and fetisely,
After the school of Stratford at Bowe,
For Frenche of Paris was to her unknowe."

CHAUCER.

WHEN female education is conducted in a very liberal manner, young ladies frequently acquire a knowledge of Latin, and occasionally of Greek. A good knowledge of Latin furnishes so excellent a foundation for modern languages, that you may deem it a valuable possession. The French, being a language so universally spoken, has long been considered indispensable to a young lady's education, though, from the imperfect way in which it is usually acquired, as a spoken language, it can be of little use. In many cases, the difficulty of gaining a correct pronunciation and accent is so great, that it is not advisable to make the attempt. To be able to read and write it well, is much better than the useless smattering which many possess. If the foundation has been well laid at school, you can continue to perfect yourself in the language, without the aid of a teacher. You have already become familiar with the amiable Madame Cottin and Madame de Genlis, and can now perhaps enjoy Molière, Racine, Corneille, and Madame de Staël. In cultivating a knowledge of this language, however, beware of becoming too familiar with modern French literature. Better to be ignorant of French entirely, than to learn it from the debasing, corrupting pages of French fictitious writing. Among modern lady authors, Mesdames Guizot, De Saus-

sure, and Necker, furnish unexceptionable reading; but be careful to learn their character before you venture upon new French books.*

The Italian is easily acquired after the French. The sweet strains of Tasso, and the sublime visions of Dante and Ariosto, cannot be perfectly transfused into another language. Modern Italy can boast of much that is interesting in elegant literature, besides the writings of the splendid Alfieri, and the well-known letters of Ganganelli. The poet, Silvio Pellico,—whose long and cruel confinement at Spielberg has been made known to the world by that most interesting book, *Mia Prigione*,—has written pure, classical drama, which may safely be placed in your hands. The Spanish can be added with so little trouble, after French and Italian, that it should not be neglected; it is a beautiful and dignified language. The German, as it is much more difficult, will remain with a favoured few; but such are its treasures, that time and labour would be well spent in its acquisition. German literature has a freshness and vigour of thought, a strength and raciness of style, beyond comparison.

Milton has, indeed, said that "one tongue is enough for any woman," and thousands of meaner minds have echoed and re-echoed this saying; but fear not. We live in another age; the charge of *blue stocking*, as applied to a literary or learned lady, when her acquirements are accompanied with true feminine modesty, is no longer a bugbear. The great danger is, of becoming a mere smatterer. The scanty gleanings of the school-room should not content you; go on with everything which you have commenced there, until you make yourself mistress of it. Having begun to build, do not incur the ridicule justly cast on her who is not able to finish. Read at least a chapter in your French or Italian

* The following brief list of French authors may possibly be of some assistance to the young reader in the choice of books:—Montaigne, Cornelle, La Fontaine, Molière, Pascal, Madame de Sévigné, Bossuet, Fléchier, Bourdaloue, Racine, Fénelon, Rollin, Massillon, Saurin, Montesquieu, Buffon, Barthélemy, D'Alembert, Saint Pierre, Delille, La Harpe, Madame de Staël, Chateaubriand, Cuvier, Sismondi, Guizot, Cousin, Lamartine, Delavigne.

Testament every day. If you have leisure, take up some standard work, read it critically, and write out its beautiful passages in your note-book. This is an admirable way to fix a language in the memory, whilst improving your mind.

CHAPTER XI.

CULTIVATION OF TASTE.

"Blest be the art that can immortalize;
The art that baffles time's tyrannic claim
To quench it." COWPER.

IN every country the useful arts must first occupy attention; as wealth and luxury increase, the ornamental follow. In a new country, mind must be long entirely occupied upon government, laws, religion, commerce, and the mechanical arts. In the infancy of a country these are the legitimate objects for the energies of mind. If it be averred, that the efforts for the mere accumulation of wealth, and the immense amount of invention expended upon the means to facilitate its acquisition, are a waste of mental power, there is truth in the assertion. But the attempt to designate ours as a mere "nation of shopkeepers" cannot stand the test of truth. Our ingenuity in mechanical arts has only accompanied a corresponding intellectual progress, and given a new impetus to taste. The supremacy of such practical arts may, indeed, be still maintained in our newer colonies; but with us this period has long passed away. Our ruined castles and abbeys preserve to us the evidences of the arts of our forefathers of a thousand years back; our line of poets descends to us from remote antiquity; and, amid the influence of education and the march of knowledge, a cultivated taste is demanded even for our manufacturers and artizans, in order that their productions may win the favour of those for whose use they are designed.

During the revolutions which have overturned Europe, many specimens of the great masters, that had been kept from age to age in the cabinets of the prince and the noble, have found their way to this country. Our artists, too, have such facilities for going abroad, that they may be found studying in the galleries of Italy, France, and Germany; in the cathedrals of Spain; seated on the prostrate columns of the Parthenon, the pride and glory of Athens; among the newly disclosed sculptures of Nineveh; or amid the once mysterious glories of Egypt, the splendid temples of Karnac and Luxor. A taste for the higher efforts in painting and sculpture depends in part upon the cultivation of the imagination. It is that which must give life and reality to the representations of the painter and sculptor.

Drawing is a fashionable accomplishment for young ladies. Unfortunately, it is seldom anything more than the mechanical ability to draw a brush over theorems cut by the teacher, or at best to copy with cold correctness; or, it may be, to paint sprawling Cupids and glaring rosebuds, to decorate an album. When the art is taught as it should be, it improves the taste for fine pictures, and for nature; and quickens the perception of beauty in all its infinite variety.

Although many may derive pleasure from drawing, few will become artists. Painting is an art, however, in which young ladies who have genius may excel, and which, indeed, they may practise as a profession. There are numerous examples for the encouragement of female artists, from Angelica Kauffmann to the lady miniature-painters, whose beautiful works ornament our exhibition rooms. And so few are the ways in our country in which females can gain an honourable independence, that this one is worthy of particular attention. But to all ladies who have a taste for this graceful occupation of their time, we would recommend the practice of drawing from nature, and both sketching and painting in the open air. Nothing will teach the art at once so well, or so pleasantly and healthfully.

A knowledge of the rise and progress of architecture ought to be acquired by every well-informed lady. She

ought to be familiar, not only with the established orders, but with the more common terms of the art, to enjoy fully the descriptions of travellers, and the minute views of buildings in engraved representations. From ignorance on this subject, much that is interesting in all modern tours and sketches must be unintelligible. The pleasure derived from seeing a fine building, too, will be greatly enhanced by knowing something of the style in which it is built. The simple, chaste Doric, the graceful Ionic, the more elaborate and beautiful Corinthian, stand unrivalled models down to the present day. The Romans claim two orders, the Tuscan and Composite; but they are only alterations and additions to the Ionic and Corinthian, and far from being improvements. Then the different mediæval styles: the solemn and imposing Norman, the light and graceful early English, the rich Decorated, and the elaborate, magnificent, Perpendicular, or Tudor, styles so perfectly suited to the solemn grandeur of the cathedral and the church; the mingled style of St. Peter's and St. Paul's; the beautiful ecclesiastical buildings of Sir Christopher Wren; and the many splendid specimens of modern architecture;—all these furnish a wide world of taste, that will richly reward the home-student as well as the traveller.

Music.—While the ear is sensible to melody, and the voice capable of producing it, music will remain, to every "nation, kindred, and people," a source of exquisite pleasure. Let those, then, who are gifted with genius for this divine art, cultivate it as they should every other good gift; not as a means of gratifying vanity, but of contributing to human happiness. Surely it is a glorious privilege which the few possess, to be able to thrill with delight, or to solemnize to deep devotion, or to rouse to enthusiasm—a privilege for which they should be grateful to Him who made the air susceptible of such infinite variety of pleasing sounds, and gave the power to call them forth.

But a fondness for music is so universal, the danger is, that young ladies will devote too much time to its acquisition. Those who have no genius must sacrifice years, and,

after all, give little pleasure by their mere mechanical performance. But fashion wills it, and who dares to dispute the despot? Her martyrs at the piano and the harp we may pity, but cannot rescue. Are they not wasting there the energies given them for other and nobler purposes? Can they not confer happiness in other ways, less costly and more enduring? What an immense amount of good might be done, if all the hours wasted in the vain attempt to become skilled in music were devoted to the cause of philanthropy!

It is pleasing to observe that a better taste in music characterizes the present day. Instead of those displays of brilliant execution which astonished without giving pleasure, we have more of the sentiment of music. Singing, too, has greatly improved; in lieu of the unintelligible jargon which might, for all the auditors could tell, be the language of Afghanistan, we now have the benefit of the words, which it is to be presumed the authors intended should be heard. Even the punctuation and the emphasis of the language can be preserved, without injuring the expression of the music "married to immortal verse."

The beauty of sacred melody is also appreciated as it has rarely been before; and its importance as a part of Divine service is receiving a degree of attention now, which is calculated to confer a new dignity on this noble gift, thus consecrated to the highest purposes; and even in the social circle to profit while it pleases.

But, fair readers, let those of you, whose musical talents can thus afford pleasure, yield to solicitation without affected reluctance. Who is not tired of the excuses reiterated in every drawing-room, "bad cold," "out of voice," "only sing a little," "never play in company," &c. &c. In fact, it is almost considered a want of modesty to play in company, until you have exhausted everybody's patience in urgent entreaties. All who understand human nature will confess there is much more true delicacy and modesty in the young lady, who, dreading to be so long the object of exclusive attention, yields to entreaty without all this coquetish delay. We

would only add, be not displeased if there are persons in society still so barbarous as to prefer animated intellectual conversation, where there is harmony of mind produced by variety, to all but the most exquisite music.

CHAPTER XII.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION.

"Dearly earned is the volume's wealth,
That ope to the lamp at night,
While the fairer rays of hope and health
Go out by the sickly light."

MRS. HALE.

It has been thought vulgar to possess health—rude health; not that any one would acknowledge herself so ridiculously absurd, yet the old adage in this case is true—"Actions speak louder than words." It is generally believed that beautiful, fragile beings, too delicate to meet the first rude blast without shrinking, are the most interesting to those arbiters whose taste is all-decisive on this matter. Man, strong and robust, likes to be the defender and protector of the weak; he likes, too, that his superiority should be felt and acknowledged. The natural delicacy and weakness of the other sex are thus fostered. That it should be so, is owing to a refined state of society, which has its many advantages, and this one, among its evils. But the arduous, imperative duties that in life's progress devolve upon woman, call for physical, as well as mental vigour. To hover round the couch of sickness, and smooth the pillow of the dying; to bear patiently with the querulous impatience of the aged, and the petulance of childhood; to lead into the right path the boisterous waywardness of youth; and to soothe, by unwearied kindness, tempers rendered harsh and irritable by intercourse with a cold, unfeeling world;—are not these a part of her humble miniatry? It seems prepos-

terous to urge the necessity of health; yet when we consider the many ways in which it is heedlessly injured, we may infer that it is considered of little importance. Want of exercise at one time, and too violent exertion at another; exposure to cold and dampness; imprudence in dress and diet;—all these conspire to impair the constitution, and produce premature old age.

Want of Exercise.—Perhaps you have no regular system with regard to this, and spend whole days in languid inactivity. Occupied with reading and needlework, days pass without any more exercise than is necessary to take you from one room to another. Your reluctance to move demonstrates the *vis inertia* of matter; the slightest labour becomes an intolerable burden. Beware! the monster dyspepsia is beckoning you for one of his sallow, meagre train. Escape for your life! Regular, active exercise, is indispensable. Walking, riding, and in a rainy day, or on other days if it be possible, active employment within doors. If your situation precludes the necessity for assisting in keeping the house in order, you can fill the flower-vases, tastefully arrange the furniture, put the books in their places, keep your own room in the neatest possible order, and find many other things to give you employment, not entirely sedentary. "Exercise is not only useful in adding to the symmetry of the form, but also in lighting up and invigorating the spark by which that form is animated and beautified." It is a wonderful promoter of cheerfulness. In the country, the care of a garden, and the delightful walks that abound, offer inducements to exercise scarcely to be resisted; in town, the change from habitual inactivity to fatiguing effort is exceedingly injurious. Standing for two or three hours in a crowded party, or dancing a whole evening, is frequently attended with fatal consequences. Coming into the air, after being heated in this manner, has often induced consumption. Alas! how many can trace this fell disease to the ball-room :—

"Away! away! there is danger here,—
A terrible phantom is bending near;

Ghastly and sunk, his rayless eye
Scowls on thy loveliness scornfully;
With no human look, with no human breath,
He stands beside thee,—the haunter DEATH.

"In the lighted hall, where the dancers go,
Like beautiful spirits, to and fro—
When thy fair arms glance in their stainless white,
Like ivory bathed in the still moonlight,
And not one star in the holy sky
Hath a clearer light than thine own blue eye,—

"O, then, even then, he will follow thee,
As the ripple follows the bark at sea;
In the softened light, in the turning dance,
He will fix on thine his dead, cold glance;
The chill of his breath on thy cheek shall linger,
And thy warm blood shrink from his icy finger!"

Our climate is so variable, that its changes should be carefully guarded against. Warm and comfortable clothing, and shoes impervious to dampness, if not recommended by the Graces, good sense and prudence will insist upon. English ladies, in this respect, are perhaps more imprudent than any in the wide world, since our climate calls for greater care than perhaps almost any other. It is a ridiculous vanity to expose life itself for the sake of exhibiting a pretty foot in the most becoming attire—a paper-soled kid or satin shoe upon a cold or damp pavement!

So much has been said upon the subject of tight-lacing, that little need be added here. The tocsin of alarm has sounded through every land where the preposterous fashion reigns. You have seen the Venus de Medici contrasted with a modern belle; which did you most admire? Undoubtedly the latter, for thus fashion blinds to true symmetry and perverts the taste.

Physicians have been faithful in reporting the deaths occasioned by these unnatural contortions, and surgeons have dissected the miserable victims. What more can be done? Forewarned thus, no more can be said. As rational beings—as accountable ones—abstain from a practice so deleterious, so wicked.

With regard to diet; a caution is necessary against cake, sweetmeats, and confectionary. A surfeit of sweets

deranges the system, and should be carefully avoided. A healthful, wholesome appetite should be desired, and an indulgence in these articles at every hour in the day will soon destroy it. There is a morbid delicacy in regard to eating, which is absurd; because Byron in his squeamishness could not bear to see a woman eat, some ridiculous coxcombs affect the same antipathy, and many a young lady has gone fasting in their company, rather than be thought so vulgar as to be hungry. Really, it would seem too absurd to mention such a thing, were it not a fact that some young ladies seem quite troubled if they have a good appetite, and make many apologies for indulging it. It may be gratified without the gusto of a gourmand. A refined and delicate manner of eating is expected, of course, in every young lady.

Among the means of preserving health, Franklin, in his letter to a young lady "On the Art of procuring Pleasant Dreams," mentions "having a constant supply of fresh air in your bed-chamber. It has been a great mistake, the sleeping in rooms carefully closed, and in beds surrounded by curtains. No outward air that may come in to you is so unwholesome as the unchanged air, often breathed, in a close chamber.

"Physicians, after having for ages contended that the sick should not be indulged with fresh air, have at length discovered that it may do them good. It is therefore to be hoped, that they may in time discover, likewise, that it is not hurtful to those in health; and that we may then be cured of the *ærophobia* that at present distresses weak minds, and makes them choose to be stifled and poisoned, rather than leave open the window of a bed-chamber, or put down the glass of a coach."

Frequent bathing is another means of preserving health. Happily it is ceasing to be thought that neither the cold nor the warm bath should be used, unless prescribed by a physician. The water should be slightly warmed, so as not to produce a chill, yet not warm enough to relax the system. Ten or fifteen minutes is long enough to remain in the bath.

CHAPTER XIII.

POLITENESS.

"There is nothing so difficult to learn, as the kind of politeness which is neither ceremonious nor familiar; it seems a trifle, but it requires a foundation in ourselves, for no one acquires it, if it is not inspired by early habit or elevation of mind."—MADAME DE STAEL.

TRUE politeness has its origin in the heart; but the external expression of it is what is commonly called good manners. Who has not acknowledged its charm, and yielded to its influence?

1. It is necessary to understand the customs of the place where you are, to avoid any departure from conventional good manners. In going into company, a young lady should learn the mode of *entrée*. In our country it is customary to take the gentleman's arm who accompanies you, and walking up to the lady of the house, to drop a courtesy—very gracefully, of course. If this is the custom, she should take his left arm, and in walking and riding the left side, thus leaving his right arm free. These things seem trifling; but by understanding them, much embarrassment may be escaped. At a dinner-party, be sure to know, before you leave the drawing-room, whether the first seat at the table belongs of right to yourself; if so, never decline it; if it does not, you will find yourself very awkwardly situated, if some gentleman, not knowing his own place, interfere with the arrangements of the lady of the house, and place you at her right hand. A quick and observant eye will soon give you a knowledge of any local peculiarities in etiquette, to which you can readily conform. A truly well-bred lady is such everywhere; she would handle an ivory chop-stick in China as gracefully as a silver fork at home, or a steel one, if she happened to be where they used no other. Even if it should have but two prongs, and incommode her not a little, she would take no notice of it; for true politeness avoids giving

pain. We have seen young ladies assume such airs—on occasions where they had met with things different from what they had been accustomed to see at home—such airs as made them quite ridiculous.

2. A well-bred woman should be perfectly self-possessed. To acquire this, a young lady must overcome that natural diffidence, or rather, the *mauvaise honte*, that will otherwise follow her like her shadow. The fashionable nonchalance, so much admired, cannot be acquired without sacrificing much that is interesting in female character. Everybody repeats, "When a girl ceases to blush, she has lost the greatest charm of beauty;" yet many of these very persons insist upon that imperturbable self-command in a young lady, which cannot be attained without some loss of truthfulness and natural modesty. Novelty and beauty must call forth, in the unsophisticated mind, wonder and admiration; there is no need of the vociferous exclamations of ignorance and vulgarity, nor the gaping wonder of a rustic; but it is unjust to compel the young to suppress entirely their enthusiasm, and practise the *nil admirari*. From practising this show of indifference, they come at last to feel it, and half the pleasure of the spring-time of life is crushed, and the mind and heart hopelessly injured. Even the attentive and observing habit of mind, upon which so much depends, is destroyed, and those tame, unmeaning characters are formed, who move about like automata—the mindless puppets of the ball-room, the pretty "wall-flowers" of the drawing-room. Every well-educated woman should be self-controlled. This comes more properly under moral discipline; yet it should form the foundation of that self-possession which is to be desired—very different from that self-satisfied and self-confident manner, which is so disagreeable in a young lady. The opposite extreme from the retiring diffidence of a young lady, which is pardonable, is that noisy, hoydenish freedom of manner, which is not, inasmuch as it is extremely troublesome, as well as contrary to good taste. The dull monotony, arising from the system of bringing everybody to the same standard of quiescence, can be borne

with more patience than the din of these romps, or the hue and cry of sentimentalists, like Dr. Syntax, in search of the picturesque. The quiet, unpretending dignity of a perfectly polite lady, is as far removed from one extreme as the other.

3. Gracefulness of motion is delightful, especially where it springs from an innocent and free spirit retained from childhood. A voice "sweet and low," and a manner courteous and gentle, are indeed "excellent in woman," but they should flow from the law of kindness written in the heart. These pleasing expressions of politeness should not be neglected; they are like the beautiful colour and rich perfume of the flower, or the graceful meandering of the rivulet, which add so great a charm to both.

4. Due deference to age and superiority. The primness of boarding-school misses has called forth sufficient animadversion and ridicule. There is little danger that these manners will continue long after their emancipation from the stocks and back-board; there is commonly excitement and pleasure enough in recovered freedom, to overcome the temporary formality which has been thus produced.

At public places young ladies cannot be too quiet, nor too reserved; here, indeed, "silence is gold." Their whispering and giggling, at concerts and other places, where some people go to hear, are intolerable. It is not only ill-bred, but actually unjust, thus to deprive our neighbour of his rights. Who does not dread the neighbourhood of a reigning belle on such occasions?

It is a grievous fault for a young lady to be so exclusively occupied with gentlemen in society, as to pay no attention to the ladies; not a very uncommon fault, either. A beautiful and admired lady, the centre of attraction, appears truly lovely when she endeavours to make others appear to the best advantage, and when, seeking out some modest, retiring girl, who has retreated to a corner, she forgets herself in contributing to the enjoyment of another. The older ladies, too, have a claim upon your attention; they, be sure, do not like to be neglected; doubtless they often forego their own pleasure to oblige you, and it is ungrateful to

show yourself insensible to their kindness. Another offensive trait is the restlessness and impatience that may be observed when others are the objects of attention ; an eye wandering in pursuit of some one to make up the deficiency, or seeking for some more acceptable person than the one who is endeavouring to make himself agreeable.

Haughtiness is so offensive to the self-esteem of every one, that it is with common consent pronounced insufferable. Pride may exist without contempt, which is an essential ingredient in haughtiness.

That confidential, communicative manner with gentlemen, commonly called flirtation, cannot be too severely reprehended. Gentlemen indulge in it for their own amusement ; but, even in their eyes, it stains the purity and lessens the dignity of a young lady's character. They doubtless often think, when they see a young lady confirmed in this habit, something like what Godfrey Percy, in *Patronage*, says—

"Sir, she's yours; from the grape you have brushed its soft blue
From the rose-bud you've shaken its tremulous dew;
What you've touched you may take;—pretty flirter, adieu!"

Flirtation should hardly indeed be mentioned as an offence against good manners, for it encroaches upon good morals, good taste, and good sense.

It has, we trust, been shown, that, after due attention has been paid to etiquette and those forms of society that are conventional, something more is necessary to constitute true politeness. It must have its origin in the heart. Where shall we find a better code of politeness than the one furnished us by St. Paul : "She suffereth long, and is kind ; seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, vaunteth not herself, is not puffed up, doth not behave herself unseemly." True, he calls it charity ; but where shall we find anything to equal it, as a guide, even in what we term good manners ? The true secret, indeed, of all politeness, is to be found in the Christian maxims : do to another as you would be done by ; and always prefer another to yourself. Politeness, in order to be easy, must be habitual. It cannot be donned and doffed as readily as Goldsmith's Chinese philosopher said

an English fine lady could put on and off her company face, made up of patches, paint, and smiles. Like a fine dress, fine manners, to be pleasing, must not occupy constantly the thoughts, but must be borne about unconsciously, as if "part and parcel of the owner."

CHAPTER XIV.

WOMAN'S HOME INFLUENCE.

Victoria. I'd put a white coil o'er my braided locks,
And be a plain, good, simple dame!

Albini. And is, indeed, a plain domestic dame,
Who fills the duties of an useful state,
A being of less dignity than she
Who vainly on her transient beauty builds
A little, poor, ideal tyranny?

Isabella. Ideal, too!

Albini. Yes, most unreal power;
For she, who only finds her self-esteem
In others' admiration, begs an alms;
Depends on others for her daily food,
And is the very servant of her slaves;
Though oftentimes in a fantastic hour
O'er men she may a childish power exert,
Which not ennobles, but degrades, her state."

JOANNA BAILLIE.

AMONG the refined and intellectual Greeks, woman occupied a very subordinate station. Although a mere slave to her haughty lord, not acknowledged as possessing the least power or influence, nevertheless, if we could have looked into their hearts and homes, a strong under-current might have been discovered, swaying the movements of heroes, philosophers, and statesmen.

The Roman women possessed more individuality and strength of character, than the light, soft, untaught Grecian dames. Their influence was not only felt, but acknowledged. It was a popular subject for the ridicule of the satirist, and of grave philosophical inquiry to the moralist. The Roman historians have portrayed the characters of

some of the noblest, and some of the vilest, of the sex. Who has not felt a glow of enthusiastic admiration for the beautiful matronly virtues of a Cornelia, and a blush of shame and indignation that womankind should have been disgraced by a Tullia?

So highly were domestic virtues prized in ancient Rome, that the following epitaph was deemed worthy to be engraven upon the splendid tomb of a Roman matron:—

"Domum mansit, lanum fecit."

Homely and faint praise would it be thought for a modern dame—

*"In her own house she stayed,
And woollen garments made."*

But all Roman women were not such mere notables as to be deserving of no higher eulogium. Calphurnia, the wife of Pliny, was his friend, counsellor, and intellectual companion. Writing to Hispula, the aunt who had educated her, soon after his marriage, Pliny says: "Her ingenuity is admirable; her frugality is extraordinary. She loves me, the surest pledge of her virtue, and adds to this a wonderful disposition to learning, which she has acquired from her affection to me. She reads my writings, studies them, and even gets them by heart; you would smile to see the concern she is in when I have a cause to plead, and the joy she shows when it is over. She finds means to have news brought to her of the success I meet with in court, how I am heard, and what decree is made. If I recite anything in public, she cannot refrain from placing herself privately in some corner to hear, where, with the utmost delight, she feasts upon my applauses; sometimes she sings my verses and accompanies them with the lute, without any master except love, the best of instructors. From these instances I take the most certain omens of our perpetual and increasing happiness, since her affection is not founded on my youth or person, which must gradually decay; but she is in love with the immortal part of me, my glory and reputation." In a letter addressed to Calphurnia herself, Pliny

thus writes: "You tell me you are very much afflicted with my absence, and that you have no satisfaction in anything but my writings, which you often lay by you upon your pillow. You gratify me very much in wishing to see me, and making me your comforter in my absence. In return, I must let you know I am no less pleased with the letters which you write to me, and read them over a thousand times with new pleasure."

When the Roman republic had increased in wealth, and the people revelled in luxury, the women ceased to retain their primitive industry and frugality. How were the latter days of Cicero embittered by the extravagance of the proud Valeria! As she brought him a fortune, she thought she had a right to indulge her expensive taste to the utmost; this involved him in such pecuniary embarrassment, that he, after enduring it many years, at length divorced her. His domestic enjoyment, however, was not insured by this measure; for soon after, marrying his rich and beautiful ward, Pubelia, he became so unhappy in consequence of her misconduct, that he repudiated her also.

The retired, quiet enjoyment of earlier days was so rare in Rome during the reigns of the emperors, that a wife like Calphurnia, possessing "frugality," might well be deemed a wonderful phenomenon. The folly and extravagance of Roman women were only equalled by Cleopatra herself. Their time was spent at the theatres, baths, and other places of public amusement, and the moral influence of home was no longer felt among a degenerate, corrupt people, hastening to their downfall.

The inhabitants of northern countries—the Germans, Saxons, and other nations of the Gothic race—were distinguished from time immemorial for their considerate, dignified treatment of women. Among the Anglo-Saxons, the head of the table, as in modern days, was assigned to the lady of the house, who was called the bread-giver, a name from which the English word lady is derived. Much of the time was spent by the men of these rude nations in social enjoyment, of which their wives and daughters were

partakers. Doubtless their manners, though rough, were rendered much less so by this circumstance. How shall we account for the horrible custom among the Anglo-Saxons, of selling their beautiful daughters into slavery? The temptations of avarice led to this abominable traffic; and the fair sons and daughters of England were "sold like cattle in all the markets of Europe."

Woman owes her present elevation of character and condition to Christianity. In all countries where its benign, holy influence is unfelt, she is still an unintellectual, a degraded being, and just in proportion to its purity and its power over a people, is her domestic happiness. In France, during the reigns of many of her volatile and vicious sovereigns, the women of the higher ranks were worshipped as goddesses, ruling the court with despotic sway, while the lower ranks were treated like field-slaves. During "the Reign of Terror," what were the women of France? The mind recoils and the heart shudders at the contemplation of the fiend-like influence they exerted. It is doubtful if at any time there has been a healthful home-influence exercised by woman upon that nation. Their language does not furnish the words home and comfort, and they live too much in public to understand true domestic joys. French women, however, have given examples of heroism, fortitude, and devoted attachment, that have few parallels; the names of Mesdames Lavalette, Roland, and Lafayette, will readily occur to the reader. They have more sentiment, enthusiasm, and romance, than English women; and less principle, stability, and good sense. Formerly, English wives were said to be the best in the world. One of the old writers, Lord Clarendon, says of the days of his grandfather, who lived in the reign of James the First: "The wisdom and frugality of that time were such, that few gentlemen made journeys to London, or any other expensive journey, and their wives never; by which providence they enjoyed and improved their estates in the country, and kept good hospitality in their house, brought up their children well, and were beloved by their neighbours."

In these comfortable homes were nurtured some of the strongest minds that England ever produced; and thus were formed some of those admirable wives, whose influence was afterwards perpetuated in New England, and has given a character to that nation, English born, which is now peopling the New World. The national character was far more moral, and more respectable, than in the dissolute reign of Charles the Second, when those delightful English homes had been broken up by civil commotions; and London became the centre of gaiety, luxury, and dissipation. The homely virtues were then quite out of fashion; unfortunately, among too many high-born and wealthy English wives, they have ever since been considered unfashionable. Noble and honourable exceptions there are at this day, and were, even during that season of turmoil and strife. During the reign of the first Charles, when the eloquence of Jeremy Taylor was often wasted upon "ears polite," there were some who listened to his pungent preaching, doubtless, with intense interest. He has left us a portrait of one of these old-fashioned wives, which may serve as a model of excellence, even for our own times. In a funeral sermon, preached on the death of the Countess of Carberry, the wife of Lord Vaughan, he says, in his usual quaint style: "I must be forced to use summaries and arts of abbreviature, in the enumerating those things in which this rare personage was dear to God and all her relatives." He then gives the following summary of the countess's excellences: "If we consider her person, she was in the flower of her age; of a temperate, plain, and natural diet, without curiosity or an intemperate palate; she spent less time in dressing than many servants; her recreations were little, and seldom; her prayers often; her reading much; she was of a most noble and charitable soul; a great lover of honourable actions, and as great a despiser of base things; hugely loving to oblige others, and very unwilling to be in arrear to any, upon the stock of courtesies and liberality; so free in all acts of favour, that she would not stay to hear herself thanked, as being unwilling that what

good went from her to a needful or an obliged person, should ever return to her again; she was an excellent friend, and hugely dear to very many, especially to the best and most discerning persons; to all that conversed with her and could understand her great worth and sweetness she was of an honourable, a nice, and tender reputation; and of the pleasures of this world, which were laid before her in heaps, she took a very small and inconsiderable share, as not loving to glut herself with vanity, or take her portion of good things here below.

"If we look on her as a wife, she was chaste, and loving, and discreet, humble and pleasant, witty and compliant, rich and fair; and wanted nothing to the making her a principal and precedent to the best wives of the world, but a long life and a full age.

"If we remember her as a mother, she was kind and severe, careful and prudent, very tender, and not at all fond; a greater lover of her children's souls than of their bodies, and one that would value them more by the strict rules of honour and proper worth, than by their relation to herself.

"Her servants found her prudent and fit to govern, and yet open-handed and apt to reward; a just exacter of their duty, and a great rewarder of their diligence.

"She was in her house a comfort to her dearest lord, a guide to her children, a rule to her servants, an example to all."

We look back with unfeigned reverence to those admirable women, whose sacrifices, labours, and courage, were instrumental in laying the foundation of our country's liberties. The noble example of her "who sat by Russell's side under the judgment seat," is evidence enough of this, though she is no solitary example of what the wives and daughters of England can do when their heroic virtues are called into action. Their self-denial, fortitude, and sincere simple piety, are beyond all praise. It may be said, that the "times that tried men's souls" developed these virtues in the other sex. Perhaps it was so; and we need not fear

that, should the hour of trial again arrive, they will not be found less ready to act worthy of their high calling and their noble descent. Yet, when we reflect on the quiet domestic virtues, which have of old so pre-eminently distinguished the wives and mothers of England, it is an important inquiry to make: Has the mantle of these venerated mothers descended upon the women of the present day? With all the improvements in modern education, are wives better qualified to make a happy home?

"Nothing lovelier can be found
In woman, than to study household good,
And good works in her husband to promote."

The brief learning of our great-grandmothers was not infrequently comprised in that respectable trio, reading, writing, and ciphering; but in strength of mind, decision of character, skilful domestic management, persevering industry, sound, sober sense, and practical religion, where are their equals?

We have not adverted thus far to the influence of mothers. "Time would fail to tell" of Timothy, Alexander, Julius Cæsar, Napoleon, Newton, Wesley, Sir William Jones, Beattie, Cecil, Hall, Hooker, Doddridge, Dwight, Arnold, Chalmers, and an innumerable cloud of witnesses to the power of this influence. Other and abler pens have portrayed the startling reality of this verity.

The influence thus committed to woman is the tenth talent, not to be spoken of vauntingly; with humility and lowliness of mind, it is to be considered a solemn and a sacred trust, which must be accounted for at the bar of God.

From the examples which have been given, as well as from our knowledge of the original design of the Creator in thus endowing woman for a companion and helpmeet for man, we infer that her true and most powerful influence must be—at home. That their influence may be happy and permanent, women must be keepers at home; earnest that the sphere which Providence has allotted them should revolve with perfect order and harmony.

What shall we say of those bold and daring innovators

who of late have given startling proof that some at least are not contented with that humble sphere, and who, imitating the excesses of other lands, would seek to originate a crusade on behalf of the so-called "rights of women!" Happily, this hankering after publicity, excitement, and power, unbecoming the true dignity and delicacy of woman, finds little countenance among the wives and mothers of England. Long may it be ere one among them can be found so far forgetful of woman's truest, noblest sphere, where she reigns with queenly dignity over an empire all her own!

The silent, resistless influence of home and the affections—this is woman's true glory. If it be, as the poet sings, that domestic happiness is the only bliss that has escaped the Fall, how sedulous should she be, to whom it is most precious, to preserve it inviolate! Instead of stepping forth upon the arena of strife, she should make her home and her fireside a quiet, sweet sanctuary for less favoured ones, who must mingle amid the jarring and conflicting elements of the world; whose hearts would otherwise be hardened and seared by constant intercourse with such a world.

Some fair reader may inquire, Why this advice to young ladies? Do you not expect at some future day to become a wife? Why should you affect to deny it? The voice of nature speaks out, and innocently too: such is my anticipation. Why should you disavow what is implanted in your heart by an Almighty hand? If any circumstances counteract this original design, you can be useful, contented, and respectable in a single state: there are too many examples of exalted and amiable character in women who have remained single, to render this doubtful. Mean and despicable is it to attach odium to that situation, which is made honourable by some of the brightest and best of the sex.

The same resources which will enable you to be happy and useful in one situation will avail you in another.

Low and ill-natured must be the spirit that would ridicule the idea of a young lady's thinking of those virtues, and cultivating those dispositions, which will ensure conjugal happiness. Every generous, high-minded man will

understand that this is her duty, and would despise the pretentious fastidiousness which affects never to think of such a condition.

A young lady who would be prepared for the responsible situation of a wife, and the respected mistress of a household, has much to learn at her mother's fireside. A cumbrous set of rules and maxims hung about one, like the charms which the gree-gree man sells to the poor African, will not ward off the evils, nor furnish an antidote to the trials, of life. It is by the habitual exercise of those affections and those principles which make her the light and life of her father's hearth and hall, that a young lady becomes fitted for another station. At home she is in the genial school ordained by Providence for the nurture of those "flowers of loveliness" which will beautify another habitation. The habit of cheerful acquiescence in the will of others may be acquired by submission to the will of parents; self-denial, by yielding to brothers and sisters; and consideration for the welfare of dependants by care not to give unnecessary trouble to servants. A young lady who is not an affectionate, docile daughter, a loving, kind sister, cannot make a good wife. Woe be to the man who, relying upon a promise made at the altar to "love, honour, and obey," trusts his happiness to such an one. A promise cannot implant new dispositions; a new affection does not often change at once the whole tenor of conduct and feeling. If it be a very strong one, it may remould the character in time; but time alone can test its strength and power. It is the dutiful daughter who will make the obedient wife. *Obedient!* How antiquated! True; almost as old as the creation. Many a silly girl exclaims, "I never will obey!" What says the philosophical Paley on the subject of obedience? "One very common error misleads the opinions of mankind on this head; namely, that, universally, authority is pleasant, submission painful. In the general course of human affairs, the very reverse of this is nearer to the truth. Command is anxiety, obedience ease." If strength and courage are given to man, he must be foremost in action and danger

If feebleness and timidity claim from him support and protection, what is due in return but love and obedience? The Germans have very orthodox notions on this subject. The famous Jean Paul Richter thus writes to his friend some time after his marriage :—

“How happy I am, you should see rather than read. My Caroline, who wins the love of all—of the men by her beauty, of the women by her captivating, cordial kindness—subdues me by happiness to contentment. We have the whole town for friends. Her almost too great indifference to going out, her sinking into quiet industry, her strong, maidenly love, her unconditional resignation to my will—all this makes our love even younger than at first, when it was merely young. That thou wilt be in love with her is most certain.”

About the same time this submissive wife writes to her father. Does she complain of her bondage, and assert her rights? She says :—

“My husband is perfectly contented with everything as it is, and I am so happy that he is so, and conform so willingly to his wishes, which to one of more pretensions would seem too limited, that I enjoy the sweet satisfaction of being to him what he requires. Let me ever repeat, that we grow happier every day. Nothing without or within disturbs us.”

Lady reader, the well-spring of the affections is in your own heart; let it not be a sealed fountain; let your love cheer your father, mother, brothers, sisters, friends; and let your gentle, docile submission to lawful authority prove that it has been well for you “to bear the yoke in your youth.”

CHAPTER XV.

A DAUGHTER'S DUTY.

"With sympathies that have their birth
Where woman's best affections lie:
With hopes that hover o'er the earth,
But fix their resting-place on high."

ANON.

How few daughters are fully aware of the sacrifices made for them by their parents! Your father, it may be, year after year has toiled for that wealth which enables him to give you the luxuries and elegancies of life. Day and night has his anxious mind been exercised for your welfare. He has spared you from home and its duties, and given up the pleasure of your society and your assistance, to fit you for life. Or, if you have been so happy as to remain beneath the parental roof, you have probably been so occupied with your intellectual education, as to have had little time to devote to him. Now that you have more leisure, inquire how you shall contribute to your father's comfort and enjoyment. Have you acquired accomplishments? Consider it the highest gratification they can afford you, to exercise them for his amusement. Let the voice which he has been the means of cultivating, yield its sweetest notes for his pleasure; let his praise be more welcome to your ear than the applause of thousands. Is he fond of reading? Select your favourite passages, and read them to him when he has leisure to listen. Madame de Staël's strong attachment to her father, M. Necker, was one of the most striking and pleasing traits in her character. In her "Ten Years' Exile," she thus mentions him: "His mind had so much vivacity and penetration, that one was excited to think by the pleasure of talking to him; I made observations to report to him, I listened to repeat to him. Ever since I have lost him, I see and feel only half what I did, when I had the object in view of giving him pleasure by the picture of my impressions."

How elevating, how ennobling, is such a confiding friendship between father and daughter! Where it is possible, cultivate most carefully such confidential intercourse. Seek that advice which a father's superior knowledge of the world renders invaluable to the timid novice, ever needing a guiding hand.

Yield to your father that ready obedience which the sacred relationship demands. Increasing years and knowledge on your part, will not free you from this obligation. One of the wisest and best men of recent times, the late President Dwight, remarked, that in the course of a long experience he had observed, "there were two sins which were almost invariably punished in this life—disobedience to parents, and falsity in love." The melancholy lives of many offending daughters bear witness to the truth of this remark. How can it be expected that they who practise habitual dereliction of duty in one relation, would do honour to any other?

The respect due to a father is often violated by those who have received a better mental education than their parents. And have you been thus elevated in mind for no better purpose than to despise him who has toiled for you, and sacrificed his own pleasure to give you this very elevation? If so, your intellect has been cultivated at the expense of your heart—an odious defect in a woman. With what agony of grief might your father exclaim, "How sharper than a serpent's tooth it is, to have a thankless child!" A delicate sensibility will lead to the greatest caution where this mental disparity exists, and the most assiduous efforts to repay, by respectful attention and kindness, the immense obligation thus incurred. The noble sentiment of the Theban general, Epaminondas, has been universally admired. After his famous victory at Leuctra, while the thrilling applause of Greece was sounding in his ears, he exclaimed, "My joy arises from my sense of that which the news of my victory will give my father and my mother." However high the elevation to which you, in the providence of God, may be raised above your parents, they, by an immutable law of

the same providence, must remain in some respects your superiors.

Can you not find some way of making yourself useful to your father? In a large manufactory, not many leagues from Paris, the daughters of the wealthy owner are the only clerks for the large establishment. They keep the books, and, with very little assistance from their father, write all the letters of a most extensive foreign correspondence. In the evening they have leisure, and elegant leisure; but until three o'clock in the afternoon they are entirely devoted to their employment. In this country such a thing would generally be regarded with disfavour, as though such an honourable occupation of time and talents would be a degradation. The delicate daughters of England shrink from the idea of industrious occupation, as if it were disgrace. Better would it be for them if they were prepared for the vicissitudes which they may encounter, by some knowledge of business, and habits of industry. True, custom does not sanction their sitting at the high desks of the counting-room, nor should we even desire such to be regarded as woman's fitting sphere; yet some knowledge such as is there employed, is calculated to prove invaluable to every wife and mother, and indeed to every woman. They may receive from their fathers that insight into the mysteries of book-keeping, which may qualify them to keep family accounts, or manage their affairs if left alone in life. All knowledge is useful, and the most unlikely kind may prove available for its possessor when least expected. If your father is a professional man, my young friend, perhaps you hold the "pen of a ready writer," and can lighten his labours. You, who have scarcely known weariness except by name, cannot imagine the wearing, distracting nature of his employment. Study to be useful to him, so far as your ability will permit; when his brow is contracted with thought, and the multiplicity of his cares and duties almost drive him mad, aid him, if he will permit you to do so, and soothe him by your kind attentions.

Has a change come over his prosperous days? Has the

wealth that patient industry or daring enterprise had gained, or that had been inherited from honoured ancestors, passed away, like the dew of the morning! What will you do to comfort him, during the heat and burden of this day of trials? It may have gratified his pride in the day of his prosperity to see you making a splendid appearance. Lessen the pain that he will feel in denying himself this gratification, by indifference on your own part. Put far away false shame, and a mistaken desire to "keep up appearances." Demonstrate to him that your heart was not fixed on splendid apparel; at the same time, show a scrupulous attention to neatness and good taste. Whatever changes may come, maintain that dignified self-respect which will secure you from contempt. You will not be lessened in the estimation of one single wise or noble-minded being, by accommodating yourself to an altered worldly condition. And here I am tempted to digress, to tell a short story:—

The tall elms, that ornament the parks and gardens, which form the lungs of the great metropolis, had burst their wintry buds, and the light and graceful branches gently waved in the breath of early spring. The grass, starting fresh from its long rest beneath its snowy covering, now wore its softest verdure. The far-reaching vista presented in the distance a perfect Gothic arch, formed by the limbs of the lofty elms which intersect each other, through the whole length of a beautiful avenue.

Two strangers, arm in arm, were slowly sauntering along, apparently deeply engaged in conversation; stopping occasionally, however, to admire a scene so new and delightful.

The taller of these strangers was a splendid girl of eighteen or twenty, with large, dark eyes, of dazzling brilliancy, and a person and gait that might have belonged to the "widow Dido." Her dress and manner proclaimed her an ultra-fashionable.

Her companion was a pale and exceedingly delicate girl, of nearly the same age. If the comparison of a rose and a lily had not been worn out a thousand years ago, it would

doubtless have served for this occasion. The lily moved with an air so sweetly feminine, so graceful and becoming, that it would have been a sad disappointment had the face not answered the expectation formed by that prepossessing air; one glance at the fair face proved that the whole was in keeping.

"The loveliness of this beautiful world! I had never eyes for it before," exclaimed the latter, whom we shall call Alice. "It realizes the truth of poetical description," continued she, leaning against one of the trees, and looking upwards.

"You might think of one stanza at least as realized, if you could see yourself, Alice, at this moment," replied the other, Irene by name.

"White bud, that in meek beauty so dost lean,
The cloistered cheek, as pale as moonlight snow,
Thou seem'st, beneath thy huge, high leaf of green,
An Eremite beneath his mountain's brow."

"Why, even you, Irene, feel the influence of this charming scene, as your quotation proves; is there not another stanza?" said Alice.

"There is," replied Irene, "but it is too sentimental; however, to gratify you, I will repeat it; but positively you are growing too romantic; it is *mauvais gout*."

"Sweet bud! thou'rt emblem of a lovelier thing—
The broken spirit that its anguish bears
To silent shades, and there, sits offering
To Heaven the holy fragrance of its tears."

Alice, dear, I verily believe the tears are in your eyes. I would not have repeated this scrap, if I had suspected you of so much sensibility. Nonsense! I would most willingly exchange at this moment, this long row of tall trees, for the same length of tall houses in Piccadilly."

"Will you tell me candidly, Irene," said the first fair and gentle speaker, "what tastes, what passions, and what sentiments are gratified by a walk in Piccadilly?"

"Who would believe it of the belle. The admired, the

courted, the idolized Alice Carson," exclaimed her gay friend, "absolutely becoming philosophical!"

"Do not ridicule, Irene, but answer me."

"Well then, *ma belle*, candidly and methodically. Under the first grand division, What tastes are gratified by a walk in Piccadilly? Firstly, a taste for the beautiful. Secondly, a taste for the sublime. Thirdly, a taste for eloquence. Fourthly, a taste for wit."

Alice. Still jesting, Irene; cannot I persuade you to speak seriously once in your life?

Irene. You will not listen to me; be patient. A taste for the beautiful—the human face divine is there exhibited most bewitchingly; the finely proportioned and graceful person, decorated by able *artistes*—feathers of all hues, collected from nature's aviary—flowers, out-rivalling nature herself; the silkworm's laborious thread, beautified to such a degree that the poor worm would never recognise his raw material—gems of "purest ray serene," no longer doomed to obscurity in dark, unfathomed caves of ocean. Have I not proved that a taste for the beautiful may be gratified in Piccadilly, that most delightful of promenades?

Alice. Most satisfactorily—to yourself. And what passions are called into exercise?

Irene. Love, ambition, envy, revenge, hatred, hope, fear, joy—all, Alice, of which the human heart is susceptible. These are the chief source of enjoyment. They keep up excitement, and prevent the sluggish current of life from absolute stagnation.

Alice. Are all these passions pleasurable?

Irene. You are departing from the question; you asked what passions were gratified.

Alice. You can tell me, then, how they are gratified?

Irene. Ambition—a desire to excel; did we not so define it at school? When you prepare yourself for a promenade, do you not desire to be more elegant, more *recherché*, more attractive, than any one else? When you first put on that pure, sweet chip-hat, with its delicate wreath of blushing

white rose-buds—for, now I think of it, they are exactly the colour of your blush at this moment—did you not cast another, and still another, look at your mirror?

Alice (interrupting). Stay, Irene; that is vanity.

Irene. Granted; that is woman's ambition.

Alice. What a confession!

Irene. Confess yourself, now—have you not thus surveyed your pretty self, from the topmost plume to the delicate heel of your shoe, and, finding all as beautiful as though you had been fitted out by Cinderella's grandmother, have you not gone forth exulting—to conquest? And when you saw all eyes upon you, and drank in admiration from every one, then you were triumphantly joyful.

Alice (sighing). Such things have been, but even then I felt that I was made for better things. There was a far-reaching hope of happiness, still unsatisfied. When admiration was new to me, I was intoxicated, bewildered by it; but it was not long before I could read envy in many an eye, and the whispers of malice and uncharitableness reached my ears.

Irene. That, of course, enhanced your enjoyment. I love to be envied, and it raises my pride to be hated.

Alice. It gives me no pleasure to be the cause of misery to others. My health, too, suffered in consequence of late hours and constant excitement. Satiety, ennui, and disgust, have since haunted my footsteps.

Irene. A goodly trio! But you have named the true cause of all—ill health.

Alice. You mistake; those artificial pleasures, those factitious enjoyments, were not suited to my nature; they palled upon the lip. Here, in this sweet spot, my soul expands; I am like an uncaged bird, soaring free into a pure, unclouded sky. Those powers that were given me for nobler purposes, but which were stifled during my butterfly career, now make themselves known; I am not all of "earth, earthy."

Irene was silent for one brief moment, and then resumed, in the same light strain: You have not allowed me to tell

you how my taste for the sublime is gratified in glorious Piccadilly by the boundary line, the magnificently ridiculous; nor how the compliments of the beaux display their eloquence, and how my wit is called into exercise to parry them, and how—

Alice. Spare me, Irene; your mirth does not harmonize with the calm serenity of this beautiful evening.

Irene. I fear we have already strolled here too long; it is getting late, and somebody says—

“The dews of the evening most carefully shun;
They're the tears of the sky for the loss of the sun.”

So saying, they hurried across the public square to the — hotel, their temporary home.

As they were ascending the steps of the hotel, they encountered a party of gay ladies, dressed in the extreme of fashion, talking and laughing loudly; and all appeared in high glee, perfectly regardless of the attention they attracted.

Alice gave her friend a meaning smile, as she said—“Do you recognise them, Irene?”

“No indeed!” said Irene, hastening into the parlour with Alice, and shutting the door quickly, to avoid them. It was useless; the party followed them, and they recognised among them two casual acquaintances, recently released from a lady's seminary, where they appeared to have acquired the accomplishments, but without the modest graces which form not the least essential part, of a young lady's education.

“Have you been taking a walk?” said one, addressing Irene.

“Yes,” she replied, rising with dignity; “and I must now hasten to occupy the time still left me.” So saying, she walked out of the room, followed by Alice.

The windows of their sleeping apartment overlooked the beautiful Green Park. The moon, now rising, shed her magic light over the scene, throwing the long shadows of the trees far across the open space, and silvering the tall

spires and towers. Irene sat gazing, wrapt in thought. Alice, too, was disposed to contemplation. A full hour passed in silence. It was broken by Irene: "Those provoking hoydens! they have put me out of conceit of myself. I will not acknowledge myself to belong to such a class; yet how, after all, do we differ? Our pursuits and enjoyments are much the same."

Alice. Exactly the same, excepting that superior wealth and education have given more refinement to our circle.

Irene. I cannot imagine any happiness but such as wealth confers, or rather procures; yet I do despise the "rich vulgar." So it is not riches for their own sake that I hold in such estimation; yet I could not be poor—the thought is agony.

Alice. You do not know your own resources. With such a mind as yours, talents so superior, you might find contentment without wealth.

Irene. Never! You do not know my pride. I would not step down one round upon the ladder of society, to save that right hand from amputation.

* * * * *

Again the young friends were walking, arm in arm, through their favourite walk. The light foliage had deepened to the richest verdure of summer, and the high grass bent to every breeze. But is that the dazzling Irene? What a change! Gloom sits heavily upon her brow; her proud, elastic step is gone. And has the dreaded evil come! Has penury marked that bright being for his own? Her father has shared the fate of thousands, and is penniless. Her high hopes of happiness were "visions loved and lost."

Alice, the kind, the gentle Alice, is also changed. The roses of health bloom upon her cheek; serene cheerfulness lights her blue eye; but it turns with soothing sympathy to her friend, as she says:—There is no reason for this despondency; you have the means of independence, Irene; you are a fine performer on the harp, and on the piano; you can teach music.

Irene. How calmly you speak of it, Alice! I teach

music! I should be bored to death with teaching. I should be so mortified, too, to meet any of my former friends.

Alice. Do you think it would lessen you in my estimation?

Irene. Perhaps not, you are so wondrously philosophical.

Alice. It would not lessen you in the opinion of any one who is governed by right feelings or right principles.

Irene. Do not speak of it, Alice; your intentions may be good, but you do not understand my character.

Alice was hurt, but she did not reply. Her own heart acquitted her: she sought her friend's best interest. After a few moments' silence she said:—*Irene*, it would give me great pleasure to have you make your home with me; but as my father has listened to my entreaty, and purchased a country-house, where we shall be very retired, on account of his delicate health, I feared it might not be agreeable.

Thank you; I am not quite destitute of a home, haughtily replied *Irene*. If my father has been obliged to give up his house in Park Lane, he will probably still take one in some genteel street. I do not think, however, I shall remain with him the next winter; it will be so intolerably dull. I can stay with my aunt Y—, or uncle T—; they both live splendidly.

Alice. And who will comfort and cheer your father?

Irene. O, my sister Mary, you know, is not yet out, and will not be these two years; she is with him, and will not mind our mortifying downfall as I do.

Alice. But, dear *Irene*, think how much she needs an elder sister's society and advice. Deprived, as we both are, of our sainted mothers, we ought to endeavour to make up the loss, as far as possible, to our younger sisters.

Irene. I tell you, plainly, *Alice*, I have none of your philosophy; my heart is set upon another dashing season in town, and my pride is up, to carry it through with as much *eclat* as we did the last. I shall show those who are rejoicing in our misfortunes, that I carry my head as high as ever.

Alice saw that it was useless to reason with her friend; she

sighed to think of the misery such false views must produce, and changing the subject, she remarked :—Are not these trees still more beautiful every day ?

Irene. No; they are hateful, abominable; the caterpillars come streaming from every leaf and branch, and give one the horrors.

“Who can minister to a mind diseased !” thought Alice, and continued the remainder of the walk silent and thoughtful.

“This is the state of man; a passing shadow
Throws down the baseless fabric of his joy.”

Irene, although endowed munificently with nature's gifts, felt the loss of wealth as the greatest earthly evil. She would not employ her musical talents, as had been suggested by Alice, as the means of honourable independence, but accepted an invitation from her aunt Y—— to pass the winter in her gay and fashionable mansion.

Meantime her father had removed to a small, but neat and comfortable house, in a *genteel* street, as *Irene* was delighted to hear, for otherwise her step would seldom have passed the threshold. Happy for him that he had another daughter ! She, though rejoicing in the gay spring-time of life, was sobered by sorrow, and taught wisdom by early misfortune. A blessed thing was it for him that he had a *Mary* !

Hard, indeed, was the struggle for the proud *Irene* to “hold up her head as high as ever.” Many there were, who slighted, who ridiculed, who slandered her. Many, who had courted her society when the mistress of the elegant mansion in Park Lane, now passed her with a supercilious nod, for she had not borne the honours of her former station meekly. Still she fluttered among the gay throng, and, with a desperate effort, seemed the very spirit of joy.

During the latter part of this anxious winter, a former suitor, whom, in the meridian of her glory, she had scornfully rejected, again paid his addresses. She accepted, although she detested him. He had one sole recommenda-

tion—he was rich. It needs no prophet to foretell that hers will be a life of splendid misery.

How acceptable are the kind attentions of a daughter in the chamber of sickness! Who can administer the healing draught, move about with soft and silent tread, and lay “the cool hand upon an aching brow,” with more tenderness than a devoted daughter!

And should age be creeping on with stealthy pace, be it your blessed privilege, my young friend, to make it “a green old age,” by your deeds of love and your excellence of character. Then, from your venerated father’s lips shall escape the heartfelt testimony: “Many daughters have done virtuously, but thou excellest them all.”

In some communications from Egypt, dated at Cairo, it is most interesting and encouraging to find, that after so many centuries of midnight darkness, the light of knowledge is at last dawning there upon woman’s mind. Mehemet Ali, whose strong mind overcame so many prejudices, at length determined, among his many improvements, to introduce the European system of education into his own family of daughters. One of his principal officers, Hekekyan Effendi, said to the English lady, who was requested there to assume the charge of an instructress: “This is only the beginning of female education in Egypt; for the Pacha has much larger views; but he wishes first to try the experiment on his own family. Much depends upon the approbation of his eldest daughter, whether instruction shall spread through the country; only gain her favour and regard, and you will carry every point to your utmost wishes.” This is saying much for a daughter’s influence. In a letter addressed to the English lady on the same subject, Hekekyan Effendi writes:—

“Previous to the Viceroy’s departure for the Said, I was directed to inform you that his Highness had examined the specimens of needlework and the drawings which you had the kindness to send; and that his Serene Highness had expressed his desire that you should visit his daughter,

Nazly Hanum, two or three times a week, at Castle Guibarra, and that you should give her your advice as to the best course to be pursued in commencing the education of his children.

"I congratulate you on this opportunity offered you to extend the blessings of instruction to the highest families of this benighted country. It is impossible to foresee the vast results which must proceed from the introduction of civilization in the family of the prince. Nazly Hanum herself pays great filial deference to her illustrious father's will in all things; and it is difficult to imagine that any obstacles should arise on her part, unless they should be determined by any, the slightest, impolitic conduct on the part of the teachers themselves.

"In seconding my illustrious prince and benefactor in his work of civilizing Egypt, I have been led to reflection by the nature of my duties, and have as yet been able to trace our debasement to no other cause than that of the want of an efficient moral and useful education in our females. I believe that, in elevating the soul by initiating it in the mysteries and beauties of nature, through the means of geography, astronomy, botany, geology, natural history, &c.—in proportion as we better comprehend the power, wisdom, and goodness of the great First Cause—so are we enabled of ourselves to detect our own errors, and feel a secret invitation in our own bosoms to abandon them. In instructing the mind and the body in those innocent, useful, and varied occupations, which are the peculiar enjoyment of females, we enable them to escape those dangers and misfortunes which are induced by the disorders of ignorance and idleness. Habits of industry, cleanliness, order, and economy, by increasing domestic happiness, will not only tend to make us better beings, but will also secure to our children that maternal education, which is, perhaps, the most important provision which can be made for after life in this narrow world, and without which no succeeding efforts to obliterate the evil impressions received in early youth can be effectual."

This is surely remarkable, coming from a land where the Mahomedan creed, that women have no souls, has so long prevailed. Miss Holliday, the English lady to whom the above letter was addressed, writes, that she hopes to enter on the work as soon as she has completed some necessary preparations. She says: "I will then pursue every measure, just so far as prudence and duty seem to dictate; holding myself at liberty to turn back, whenever I find it involve anything contrary to Christian principle."

The proceedings thus begun still progress. It is impossible to estimate the amount of good that may be done through such influence as that of Miss Holliday and Nazly Hanum.

Imagination portrays the delight these young Egyptians will feel, when the long-hidden mysteries of literature and science shall be revealed to their wondering minds. And in ages hence, perhaps, Mehemet Ali's eldest daughter will be loved and honoured as the noble benefactress of Egypt, the day-star that first cheered her country on its way to civilization, and would that we might add, Christianity.

Influence, like charity, begins at home, and like it, too, is in its nature diffusive. The sequestered mountain-lake sends from its embowered solitude perennial streams, to gladden many a fair and fruitful field.

It may be thought an unpardonable omission, if the daughter's duty to her mother should be passed over without a word. And yet, my dear friends, I feel disposed to commend it to your own hearts and consciences, and there leave it. If generous impulses do not produce tenderness and obedience, kindly aid and consideration, and entire confidence, advice is powerless. If filial affection gush not spontaneously from an overflowing heart, what magician's rod can call it forth? In early Rome there was no law against parricide, because it was deemed impossible. It seems equally impossible that a daughter should be wanting in affection and duty to her mother.

CHAPTER XVI.

A SISTER'S INFLUENCE.

CLARA WILTON.

Jane. All sisters are not to the soul entwined
With equal bands; thine has not watched for thee,
Wept for thee, cheered thee, shared thy weal and woe,
As I have done for him.

De Montfort. Ah! has she not?
The sum of all thy kindly deeds
Were but as chaff poised against massy gold,
Compared to that which I do owe her love.

MISS BAILLIE.

"I WILL be a German in literature, an Italian in *virtu*, a Frenchman in *gourmandise*, an Englishman in politics, and a Spaniard in love. My rôle has been well studied, and it will show a pitiful want of spirit if it be not well played." So said George Wilton, a young American traveller, as the vessel which bore him to his native land neared the shore. He had left home to travel in Europe, and to study a profession, when he had just attained his one-and-twentieth year, and had passed nearly four years abroad.

"New York is a fine city—a glorious city; I am not ashamed of her; she bears comparison with any of the boasted cities of the Old World," said George, as her hundred spires, far-reaching streets, forest of masts, and busy-plying steamboats scattered over her beautiful harbour, all bathed in bright sunlight, glittered before his ardent gaze.

Among the many who crowded to meet long-absent and loved ones, and welcome the wanderers home, Wilton recognised not one well-known face; yet all looked familiar, for they were his own countrymen, speaking his own language, which, spite of his affectation and foreign prejudices, sounded like music to his ears.

"I am too completely a cosmopolite," thought he, "to

be troubled at not meeting with friends, and too long an isolated being to care much for kindred ; but home I must go, to see the old people and their hopeful progeny."

He ordered his valet—for he sported such an appendage—to collect his luggage, consisting of trunks, portmanteaus, boxes, dressing-cases, hampers, and baskets, which spoke, as plainly as luggage could, of the *virtu*, literature, and *gourmandise* of which he boasted.

"And this hotel I am not ashamed of," thought Wilton, as he drove up to the Astor House. "Few hotels in Europe are superior to this immense structure."

A formidable array of sauces and wines about his place at table established his reputation, with men of sense, as an un-naturalized and spoiled American, and with the young and silly of both sexes, as an elegant travelled gentleman. Unfortunately, the exhibition of such elegance or folly has become too common to attract much attention. Wilton found himself equalled by many at table in the variety of his wines and liqueurs. Hock, sauterne, lachrymæ Christi, champagne, &c., &c., gratified the pride more than the taste of extravagant young men. Abroad, the expense of wine was comparatively trifling; here it was enormous. Wine-drinking, though too frequently a vice, is often a mere matter of display. A journeyman tailor calls for his champagne, that he may appear like a gentleman. The *parvenu* exquisite, too, in the superlative fineness of his broadcloth, the variety of his trinkets, chains, rings upon his fingers and thumbs, and even in the delicacy of his perfumery, rivals any *petit-maitre*. Poor Wilton's hopes of distinction from these sources were entirely frustrated. The conversation at table was also Parisian in the extreme. The reigning *stars* at the opera and theatre, and their *crack* performances, the races, with the pedigree of racers, gastronomic discussions upon *ragoûts* and *pâtés*, and other still more questionable subjects, convinced Wilton that his own country had made rapid progress, during four years, in European luxuries and follies. The older men raved of politics, and day after day condemned their "favourite

aversions." Brokers talked of the rise and fall of stock, as learnedly and as eagerly as upon "'Change" in London. In short, Wilton, in spite of all the efforts of Monsieur Toupet, his valet, and his own exquisite nonchalance, found himself but little noticed. Displeased with an exhibition where he could not be the "observed of all observers," he resorted to the yet untried field of German literature, but with equally poor success. But one resource was left—*virtu*.

His raptures upon foreign *chef-d'œuvres* were met by a cool assertion, that the Academy of the Arts of Design could show as fine an exhibition as any in the world. When he spoke with enthusiasm of the old masters, he was told that was merely a prejudice; and one gentleman who had seen them, said they were nothing but dark shadows, "all covered with smoke, and were not half so neat and gay as our pictures." Of statues, "we had casts of all of them, which were just as good as the originals." Wilton took refuge in contemptuous silence.

Another week, and Wilton was near the home of his childhood. Why should he have wandered from it so far and so long? It was a beautiful, picturesque village in the western part of the state of New York. The lovely lake glowed like burnished silver beneath the sky of sunset. It was a calm and tranquil hour. Those thousand associations linked with his boyhood came thronging around the traveller, and that half painful, half pleasurable emotion which a return after long absence produces, overpowered him. A gush of genuine natural feeling warmed his heart, and glowed upon his countenance. A tear even started to his eye, but he brushed it hastily away, saying contemptuously—"Am I still a boy?"

Four years had produced only that change in the family of Wilton which years always produce. Time had dealt kindly with the hearty, good-natured father; no wrinkles yet furrowed his smooth brow; a few gray hairs alone silvered his side-locks. Mrs. Wilton, too, was but little changed. William, the brother of George, from a stripling

of seventeen, seemed a young giant, looking down upon his delicate elder brother. The grasp of his strong hand, and his loud "How are you, George!" quite unsettled the nerves of the elegant exquisite. Striking, too, was the change in his three sisters, children when he left them, now all young ladies.

"What are you going to do with these great staring girls, father!" was George's first salutation.

"Do with them!" exclaimed the proud father; "keep them at home as long as I can; they are the prettiest and best educated girls in the country. Don't be bashful, girls, before your brother George; if he has seen foreign countries, he has not seen any better than his own—nor any better folks either." George acknowledged to himself that they were fine girls, but doubted much if he should find them well educated.

Uncommon preparations had been made for the reception of the travelled brother. The tea-table was spread with a variety of cake and sweetmeats, cold ham, smoked beef, cheese, biscuit, &c., &c.

The patience of the whole family was tested while George made his elaborate toilet. Mr. Wilton paced the hall, drawing out his watch every five minutes. "We have waited tea two hours before he came, and one hour since," said he. "Spoilt entirely, spoilt entirely!"

"What is spoilt, papa?" said Julia, the eldest daughter; "the tea! I can make it fresh at table."

"No," replied Mr. Wilton half sorrowfully, "not the tea; your brother is spoilt; you can't make him fresh again."

"O, he is not at all injured by travelling," replied Julia; "he is a superb man, a perfect gentleman." She had been educated at the fashionable institution of Mrs. Z——, and was considered the belle of the family.

"What do you think, Clara?" continued Mr. Wilton, turning to his second daughter; "shall we ever take any more comfort in your brother! Is he not quite a foreigner!"

"He is very much changed, undoubtedly," replied Clara;

"but that you expect of course, papa; we have yet seen him but a moment."

"I think he is changed altogether for the worse, for I am afraid to speak to him," said Mary, the youngest sister, a black-eyed romp of sixteen. "What do you think of him, Bill?"

"I caught his lily-white hand, and gave it such a grip he won't get over it very soon," replied William; "and as for his Mounseer, I had a great notion to give him a hoist into the yard, when he came parley-voing to me about some 'vam vater for Monseer Vilton.'"

"My children," said the kind-hearted mother, "how can you be finding fault already with your long-absent brother; he is the finest-looking man I have seen for many a day."

Just then George made his appearance.

"Come to tea," said Mr. Wilton; "we have waited long enough in all conscience."

"So you take tea yet, mother?" said George, gallantly offering his arm.

"Take tea! to be sure we do; how could we get along without it?"

"Why, in Europe we dine about this hour, and tea, as a meal, is quite unknown. Bah!" exclaimed George, as he reached the bountiful tea-table; "what a profusion of Yankee sweets! cold ham and raw beef too!—barbarous!"

"Barbarous indeed," lisped Julia; "we never had anything but a bit of dry toast or sponge cake at tea in New York, and it looked so odd to me when I first came home."

"Come, sit down, Bill," said Mr. Wilton, "we can do full justice to cold ham or beef after waiting three hours beyond our usual time."

"That we can, for I am half starved," said Bill, driving his fork into the ham, and cutting off a goodly slice; "I don't see what difference it makes whether we call it tea or dinner, it is all the same thing: we eat when we are hungry, and drink when we are thirsty."

Clara poured tea, and presided at table with ease and dignity. George balanced his tea-spoon upon his cup

awhile, and then called his valet to bring some claret, and he would "just taste a bit of cheese. He did not know, however, that he could venture, as it was neither Stilton nor Parmesan." Clara saw an angry frown upon her father's face, and changed the subject by asking George if New York had not improved during his absence.

"Very much; I am not at all ashamed of our city; she looks proudly as you approach her, and very well sustains a nearer view; but the people—the people——"

"Take another cup of tea, George," interrupted Clara, fearing again to see the unwonted visitant upon her father's pleasant face.

George now remained silent, attentively studying the countenance of his sister Clara. "Hazel eyes, no; deep, dark gray; the finest eyes without exception that I ever saw; but so hidden beneath those long lashes and overhanging brow, that half their power lies waiting to be called forth. Beautiful, brilliant complexion, English entirely; a most feminine mouth, and a very tolerable straight nose, not handsome, after all; don't like the expression, don't understand it." Thus thought George, as he scrutinized his sister's face with the most complete nonchalance. During this time silence had been maintained; it was broken by Mr. Wilton.

"Clara, what is the matter, child! are you ill! You have much more colour than usual."

"I am perfectly well, thank you."

"Where are your spirits, then?"

"Somewhat like the spirits of Glendower: they will not always come, even when you do call them. When a long-expected pleasure arrives at last, I am apt to be a little sad; I cannot tell why. Have you not felt so, papa?"

"Yes, often and often, dear child; but I never quite understood the philosophy of it. I thought you would have a thousand questions to ask your brother when he came home."

"I shall, when we are better acquainted."

"Acquainted!" said Mr. Wilton; "that sounds strangely between brother and sister."

"Excuse me, father," said Clara, slightly blushing; "my brother does not know me at all; and why should he? Eight years have elapsed since we have lived together, excepting during his short vacations while at college. Our characters must have changed as much as our persons during that time."

"Very true," said George; "I only remember you as a curly-headed, blue-eyed, laughing girl, whom I used to call my bacchante, and crown with vine-leaves to make the resemblance complete."

"Or pin paper wings on my shoulders, to make me look like a fairy, sylph, or something else," said Clara, her countenance brightening at the recollection of her merry childhood.

"Blue eyes!" said Mrs. Wilton; "Clara never had blue eyes; they were always a sort of gray."

"*N'importe*," said George; "I always thought they were blue; I should not have known Clara at all, she has become so staid, so dignified. What do you think of me, sis!" continued he, playfully.

"I have not made up my mind what to think of you yet, brother."

"Will your high mightiness be pleased, when you have fully perused me, to inform me of the important decision?" said George, changing his tone to one intended to be very sarcastic.

The large orbs of Clara were quickly suffused with tears; she fixed them seriously upon George, and replied, "The opinion of a simple country girl like myself can be of little consequence to an accomplished *foreigner*."

"I don't know what to make of her; was she ever from home?" whispered he to Julia.

"From home! she was two years with me at Mrs. Z——'s."

"Possible! then I am more puzzled than ever."

They then rose from the table. Mr. Wilton said he and William had some business to transact, and George might go and entertain his mother and sisters in the drawing-room. When there, George drew his mother some distance from hi

sisters, and began questioning her in a low voice. "Mother, do you not think your son has improved by travelling?"

"Very much indeed, with the exception of those monstrous whiskers; they really disfigure you."

"O, they are all the fashion, and quite indispensable in Europe. You really have got three nice girls; rough and unpolished, but brilliant gems. Julia, with her city airs and graces, I perfectly understand; she is beautiful. Mary, the laughing hoyden, wild as a young squaw; she is a splendid creature: but I do not know what to make of Clara."

"Clara!" said Mrs. Wilton, her eyes brightening. "You do not understand Clara! why, she is the pride of your father."

"That may be, but what are her pretensions?"

"Pretensions! she is the most unpretending girl in the world; the very servants idolize her."

"That may all be true, yet it gives me no insight to her character."

"I trust to her for everything. You know I have delicate health; Julia is fond of music and drawing, and cannot bear to do anything in the kitchen; she has no taste for household matters, and Mary is too young; so the burden comes upon Clara."

"Then she is one of your bustling notables, I suppose; a mere household drudge."

"You will find her out in time," said Mrs. Wilton, smiling significantly.

"As for Bill, he is a rough, coarse fellow: one needs a vocabulary for his talk; it is utterly unintelligible."

"He is an active fellow. He loves horses rather too well, and has been a little wild; but lately he has been devoting himself to business, and is getting to be very rich."

"The flouring business goes on yet, I suppose? I hoped father had retired from it before this time."

"O, your father has not confined himself to that alone in these stirring times. He has been speculating in almost everything."

"Then I hope he is rich enough to leave off making money, and enjoy it like a gentleman."

They were interrupted by the entrance of Mr. Wilton and his second son. "William has to start for the West on business of importance to-morrow morning, bright and early; and as I suppose you don't rise before the sun, George, you will not see him again soon."

"I was just thinking about retiring," said George, "for I am intolerably fatigued; I must summon Toupet; where is the bell?" said he, looking round the room for a bell-cord.

"We don't use them; servants won't come for bell-ringing here; they are too independent," said Bill. "Your Johnny Crapeau ought to be tied to a bell-rope, or have one round his neck, for making a white slave of himself; a fellow, too, dressed in broadcloth and satin. George, how can you have such a man-doll about you?"

"Good night," said George, bowing around. "*Bon soir, mes belles sœurs.*"

Only one week had passed away; George had seen all the *natives*, as he called the villagers, and excited their wonder or scorn, and was dying of ennui. He must be off to Saratoga. The country was too intolerably stupid.

"Well, George," said Mr. Wilton, "what have you been about in Europe? I have not questioned you much yet. Have you got your M.D.?"

"No M.D. for me. I hate the whole study and practice of medicine."

"Why, you went to Paris to walk the hospitals."

"I did, and walked through them and out of them for ever. I found I had too delicate nerves for a physician."

"Then what in the name of common sense have you been studying these four years, spending my thousands abroad?"

"*Tableaux, statues, gems, coins, architecture, antiquities, la belle science de la cuisine, &c., &c.*"

"Enough, enough! by which of these are you going to earn your living?"

"By the last, I suspect; but that is such a homely question."

"It's a home question, and one that must be answered, sir. Here, Bill has been staying with us ever since you left,

with no advantages but common-school learning ; but he is a keen one, a real man of business ; he is worth a round hundred thousand himself."

"I am glad he has been so successful ; you will have the goodness, sir, to allow me to take time for consideration ; and as this is the season of travelling, I should like to take Julia to Saratoga. She is too pretty to be cooped up for ever in this mean little village."

"The village is good enough—the prettiest village in the country everybody says."

"O, certainly, the scenery is very beautiful ; but you know, father, Julia never can make her market here ; there is nobody good enough for her. All the world goes to Saratoga at this season."

"The more fools they, to leave their own comfortable homes to be shut up there in rooms ten feet by six, when the weather's melting hot. Besides, I do not want to send my girls like hogs to market."

"An unseemly comparison, father ; they are beautiful girls, and I should not be at all ashamed of Julia, at Saratoga or anywhere else."

"Of Julia ! why not Clara too ; you are not ashamed of her, are you ?"

"Not exactly ; but she is quite eccentric, has some very common, plain notions, and is rather country-bred. You must excuse me, father ; most American women are rather deficient in manners."

"The American women are the most virtuous women in the world, whatever their manners may be ; and as for Clara's not being fit to go to Saratoga, she is fit to go there, or to Washington, if she is not fit for the court of the Emperor Louis Napoleon, which I hope and trust she never will be. If she wants to go to Saratoga, she may go." So saying, he went to seek his favourite daughter.

George cared little how his point was gained, if he only succeeded. The thought, however, crossed his mind, "I should be ashamed of Clara's downright honesty among fashionable people."

Mr. Wilton soon returned to say that Julia wished very much to go to the Springs, and Clara would like it, if it were perfectly agreeable to him, and her dear mother could spare her. "Dear child," continued Mr. Wilton, brushing a tear from his eye, "we do not know how to spare her a single week; but we will not be selfish: she needs some recreation. You may go, George, but keep a careful eye over your pretty sisters there. It is the haunt of fortune-hunters."

George was not very much pleased to owe his father's consent to one whom he styled "a pert little miss, who had unaccountably gained the ascendancy over her doting father."

Everything was soon put into a regular train of preparation. George superintended all things—giving directions to the mantua-maker about sleeves, boddice-waists, and frills; very much to the amusement and annoyance of the village *artiste*.

Two hundred miles are nothing at all in these railroad times. "Everything in this country," says the American authoress of this narrative, "drives too fast. An impetus has been given that has sent us fifty years too far ahead." But to our story.

"This is a brilliant assemblage," said George, as he promenaded the ball-room of the —— at Saratoga, with Julia and Clara; "I am not ashamed of it."

"You often make use of that expression, George. Why should you be ashamed of your country or your countrymen?" asked Clara.

"I shall be ashamed of one of my countrywomen, if she chooses this time and place for a sermon."

They were interrupted by the approach of the Hon. Mr. G——, a United States Senator, who had become acquainted with both the girls, when on a tour to the West the preceding summer. Julia introduced him to her brother.

"Allow me to rob you of one of these ladies," said the honourable gentleman, offering his arm to Clara. She

modestly accepted it, and thus they promenaded the room until the dancing commenced.

The beautiful sisters attracted much attention. Julia was pronounced, by connoisseurs, a belle, the leading star of the season. Clara, from her animated conversation with the senator, and her decidedly intellectual physiognomy, was declared a *blue*. With a sensible man like Mr. G——, she was perfectly at ease. His conversation interested and amused her, and her own became animated and brilliant. Her countenance was as variable as her feelings, and ever a true index to them, the vivacity and spirit which now illuminated it, gave a new brilliancy to her eyes, and a finer glow to her complexion.

"That is the finest face that I ever saw," said an elderly gentleman to his friend; "who can it be?"

"You observe Mr. G—— is the gentleman in attendance."
"I did not observe it before. I must seek an introduction," said the first speaker, who was one distinguished among his countrymen.

Although Julia's beauty had at first attracted universal admiration, at the end of a week Clara was the centre of attraction. George was surprised to hear her now talking French with a foreign minister, perfectly self-possessed; then conversing, with the same simplicity and ease as she would have done with her father, with the gallant senator. "I might well say I did not know that girl," thought he. In spite of all his efforts to be *distingué*—his wines, gastronomic science, &c., &c., with the efficient aid of Monsieur Toupet at the toilet; poor George was obliged to owe his distinction and the attention he received to the beauty of one sister, and the talents and charming manners of the other. He had to submit to being constantly named as "the brother of the Misses Wilton." He was acting a part that sat ungracefully upon him, and made pretensions which everybody's pride resisted. Clara, on the contrary, was independent and original, without being conscious that she was so. She pleased, because she made the grave and the gay, the young and old, pleased with themselves. Her

object was not to attract attention, nor to compel admiration, but the same that it had been habitually at home—to make every one happy. Of course, those who approached her put on their holiday faces, and appeared to the best advantage. There was a truthfulness in her very nature that won confidence. She gave her opinions, when they were asked, with unshrinking moral courage, but obtruded them upon no one, and was ever the gentle but firm advocate of virtue and right principles. Vice stood abashed in her presence, and “felt how awful goodness is, and truth how lovely.”

George paid but little attention to his sisters. They had found an excellent friend in an aunt of the Hon. Mr. G——, an elderly and very intelligent lady from the South, who took a truly maternal interest in them. Mr. G—— himself was constantly of the party, and rode, talked, walked, just as it suited their pleasure.

“Girls,” said George, one morning as they walked in the piazza of the hotel, “I have spent my last penny—I am literally *sans argent*. This Saratoga is a horrid bore after all, where one spends money terribly. Your purses, girls, if you have any to spare.” The sisters handed them most readily; they had been scarcely touched.

“Pay our bill,” said the straightforward Clara, “and let us go home immediately, George, if you have enough.”

“O, cannot we stay a little longer, Clara?” said Julia, eagerly; “I do not wish to leave yet.”

“Stay! to be sure we can,” replied George; “and I have no idea of quitting yet. You must write home to the old gentleman for more money, Clara; you can get anything out of him.”

“What shall I tell him you have done with the ample funds with which he supplied you?”

“Nothing; the old man knows there are ten thousand ways of disposing of the needful.”

“I beg of you, George, to speak more respectfully of our kind father.”

“Spare your eloquence for the Hon. Mr. G——,” said George, hastily quitting the room.

The next morning found George Wilton extremely ill, threatened with fever. He insisted upon going home immediately. As Saratoga was no place for them under these circumstances, they immediately consented. "But what shall we do?" said George; "I spent all your money last night at the billiard table. I came home somewhat oblivious, I believe; for I have a faint recollection of scolding and kicking Toupet, and the rascal has decamped with my watch, brooches, rings, and even my snuff-box." The girls looked at each other in consternation. Just at that moment a knock was heard at the door of George's room, where they were holding this consultation; a waiter handed a letter, saying it had been sent by express. It contained the melancholy intelligence that Mr. Wilton had been seized with a fit of apoplexy, and was in imminent danger. William had not yet returned. Mrs. Wilton and Mary begged the immediate presence of George and his sisters.

"What will our poor father do without his Clara?" exclaimed Julia, bursting into tears.

"We must start for home to-day, live or die, Clara," said George, "and you must go and consult Mr. G—— about the readiest means of conveyance."

Poor Clara blushed, and for a moment hesitated.

"It is no time for fastidiousness," said George.

"It is no time for reproaches," thought Clara, and went to ask for an interview with Mr. G—— in the drawing-room.

With modest embarrassment, she asked his advice and assistance, candidly stating all the difficulties in which they were involved.

"My dear Miss Wilton," said Mr. G——, "the pleasure I feel in being able to assist you in the slightest degree has one drawback; gratitude is not the only sentiment that I wish to inspire in your heart. I am grieved to place you under the least obligation to me for a moment."

"You need not regret it, since I am not unwilling to incur such obligation."

"There spoke my noble Clara. I thank you a thousand

times. And will you allow me to accompany you home? My carriage will be easier for poor George than any other conveyance."

Clara's heart throbbed, and she could only say, "O, sir, you are very kind."

"I would, Clara, that any other time had offered, rather than this, to urge my hopes and wishes. It seems almost cruel to improve this occasion; but your frankness and independence are such, as to leave no doubt on my mind that you will act freely. Will you, at no distant day, give me a legal claim to be your protector: You have known for some time how entirely my happiness is in your keeping."

Clara replied, her eyes filling with tears: "We shall soon see my dear father. I must hasten to tell George and Julia of your arrangements for our return."

George's illness increased every hour, until at length, when they reached home, he was in a violent fever, attended by most alarming symptoms.

Although Mr. Wilton had apparently nearly recovered his bodily health, his mind was hopelessly impaired, and it was deemed imprudent to mention George's illness in his presence. He was delighted to see his darling Clara again, and wondered at her frequent absences, while she was in her brother's room, ministering to his comfort. He seemed, indeed, to have forgotten his son's return from Europe, for now he never spoke of him.

Mr. G—— left the village soon after seeing the family reunited. Although Mr. Wilton was in such a state as to be entirely oblivious to many things, his mind was not altogether deranged. To the proposal of Mr. G——, he yielded a pleased consent, saying his beloved Clara would do honour to any station. It was affecting to hear him, at the same time, solemnly commit her to his care, as if she were still a little child, imploring him to be gentle and kind to the helpless lamb that he spared from his own bosom.

George, whose constitution had been injured by excess in the luxuries of the table, continued alarmingly ill, and he was himself entirely hopeless of recovery. Julia had

been his favourite, but her inefficiency in a sick-room was painful to him and to herself. Clara, unable to be with him much during the day, watched by his bed-side night after night. She slept only at intervals during the day-time, in her father's easy-chair. He was perfectly contented so long as he could look at her lovely face, and seemed not to perceive that it was pale and anxious.

"Clara," said George, one night, as she sat by him, "I have made a discovery."

"What is it, brother?"

"I know your governing motives: those deeply-rooted religious principles, which I have never appreciated, and scarcely till now believed in their existence. It is your perfectly feminine character, harmonizing so beautifully with these strong principles, that excites my wonder. I see they are the moving power of the whole moral machine. I have sought only my own pleasure, lived to no good purpose, and look back upon a spent life of utter worthlessness with remorse."

"Say, rather, dear George, with repentance."

"Talk to me often, dear sister, on this subject," replied he; "I am but a heathen."

"I can do better than talk to you, George; I can send for our excellent friend, Dr. Molesworth."

"No, no, Clara, I prefer listening to you; it is his business, his duty—"

"Stay, brother; he understands better than I do these momentous truths."

"That may be; but you feel their happy influence; while the dew is still upon the flowers of life, you have thought deeply, and given the incense of obedience from a warm, pure heart."

"You know not how sinful that heart is; but since you are willing to listen to these sublime truths, I will read to you from a book that can give you instruction and consolation." So saying, she took up her little Bible, which she had often used while her brother slept, and only waited for a suitable opportunity to read aloud.

"What shall I read to you, George?"

"The parable of the prodigal son, if you please."

As she read with touching pathos this inimitable parable, George made no comment, but tears were upon his emaciated cheeks. Soon after, he said to her, "I have been viewing the character and conduct of young men in the light of eternity. It will not even bear the light of common sense; but in view of that account, which all must render at the judgment-seat of God, how does it appear? Fearfully wrong. If I could but live my life over, but that may not be; and if I should be spared, could I persuade the infatuated beings who are chasing delusive bubbles, of their folly—of their crime? Clara, your sex have much to answer for. Your influence is all-powerful with us; why is it not more frequently exerted for our good?"

"The influence is mutual; the things which you admire, in general, are not such as exalt our character as rational and immortal beings—beauty, wealth, wit, fashion; but as long as they are the main object sought by man, you must not wonder that we are eager for their possession."

"Yet how many more of your sex are found on the side of religion, than of ours! What is it that so fatally blinds us? Alas! that I should have discovered my folly too late!"

"It is not too late," said Clara.

"Not too late perhaps for repentance," he replied, mournfully, "but too late for renovation; I cannot now lead a new life, for it is almost spent."

"Not too late for regeneration," replied Clara; "for a new heart, God, through the influence of his Spirit, will give you, if you earnestly desire and ask for it through the merits and mediation of the great Physician of souls, who came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."

"My mind is all dark upon these subjects; they are mysterious, and I have called them a delusion."

Clara was now summoned hastily out of the room. Her brother William had arrived; his schemes had proved visionary. The two largest debtors of his father and

himself had failed, and involved them deeply. Various speculations had been engaged in with his father's capital ; even his mills and house had been mortgaged to furnish funds for these speculations.

William had not been prepared for the trying circumstances that awaited his arrival. A generous, merry-hearted fellow, thoughtless and venturesome ; when the gales of summer floated the family bark, a pleasant companion, but totally unfit to take the helm during the wintry storm. He shrank dismayed from the responsibility that now devolved upon him. Clara encouraged him to have more confidence in himself.

"O Clara," he replied, "would that I had your strength of mind !"

Clara replied, "You have not hitherto been called upon to exert your own ; you will find it sufficient if you have more reliance upon yourself. You must come to the task with courage and humility, for they are not incompatible. If my father should inquire of you about his affairs, tell the truth ; it is the safest and the best course. If he should not, do not allude to business at all. Take courage, and all may yet be well."

"Take courage," said William ; "yes, I will ; when I have such a sister, shall I shrink from my duty ?"

Clara was just leaving the room ; she turned back, and said solemnly, "You have a mother and three sisters, who must lean upon you ; look to God for strength in this trying hour."

Scarcely had the words passed her lips, when they were summoned to the bedside of their dying father. A second fit of apoplexy had seized him, and he was already speechless ; a few moments, and all was over.

Poor George rang the little bell by his bedside, again and again, unheeded. Alarmed at the long absence of Clara, he crept from his bed, and slowly made his way to his father's room. With his ghastly countenance and emaciated figure, he looked like a spectre among the weeping family. He cast one look of agony at his departed father, and then

suffered himself to be led by his brother to his own apartment. "How unkind I was to you, George, when last I saw you," said William, with honest frankness; "I hope you do not remember it now."

"My dear brother, the unkindness, I fear, was on my part; forgive me!"

* * * * *

Weeks passed away, and George Wilton, after a severe struggle for life, was decidedly convalescent. Still he needed much attention. William was ever at hand to aid him; and Clara, though now obliged to devote much time to her woe-stricken mother, was still "his ministering angel."

"How could I have been so blind as not to perceive that admirable girl's worth, when I first returned from Europe?" exclaimed George, one day, as she left his room.

"Because," replied William, "you were then a foreigner, and she is a true American girl."

"She is more; a true Christian, unostentatious, not given to speak, but to act, charitable, cheerful. I am amused sometimes, however, by her strong attachment to our church; for so I trust I may term it, unworthy member as I am."

"I do not think she is illiberal or bigoted."

"By no means, or she would never have exercised such a blessed influence over my mind. I came home a swaggering fool; ashamed of my country, and, may God forgive me! of my relations too! If my life should be spared, I hope I shall redeem my character, that they may never again have occasion to be ashamed of me."

"You are too severe upon yourself, brother; only a little inflated you were; a few severe puffs, and you are quite natural again. If you owe much to Clara, I am equally her debtor. When you are stronger, I will tell you all about it."

After the expiration of many months, when health and some degree of cheerfulness were restored to the Wilton family, and their affairs had all been settled, so that every

creditor was satisfied, George resumed the study of his profession. There was still a sufficient sum remaining to purchase a good farm. William became a thorough, persevering agriculturist, making his house a pleasant home for his mother and younger sister.

It was not until all the duties which Clara owed to her family, in their bereavement and affliction, had been affectionately and faithfully performed, that she gave her hand to Mr. G——.

On that occasion, though the wedding was a private one, Clara remembered a promise she had made to her school-mates, Isabella and Geraldine. The former accepted the invitation ; Geraldine had not returned from Paris.

"Now, Clara, you shall wear the gold medal," said Isabella, taking from a jewel-box upon the dressing-table the prize which had been a source of sincere delight to her when she received it, from the pleasure she knew it would afford to her parents. "You are all arrayed for this important ceremony ; but I do insist that you wear this, as a testimony of your worth, for fear the Hon. Mr. G—— should repent before he gets to church, and turn back, unless there is golden proof of your superiority, mental and moral, right before his eyes."

Clara. "Isabella, dear, you are the same gay, thoughtless creature as ever."

Isabella (*sighing deeply*). "Yet, Clara, I am not happy ; the pleasures that I so fondly anticipated grow wearisome. I have partaken of them to satiety ; but I cannot withdraw from the brilliant circle, of which, they flatter me, I am the life and soul. Come, we must proceed to the drawing-room ; and since you think there is no danger that the honourable gentleman will change his mind, I'll leave the medal where I found it. O, how I burned with envy, when Mrs. Z—— presented it to you, before the *élite* assembled at our examination. You deserved it, dearest ; you were the best, the kindest scholar ; you have maintained that superiority as a sister and daughter, and I know you will make such an obedient, loving wife, that when men want to

recommend a pattern to their wilful ones, they will say, 'Now, only look at Mrs. G——.' "

Clara. "Spare me, Isabella; I am painfully conscious of my imperfections, and you deepen this consciousness by your extravagant praises. My reliance is upon Him who has hitherto been my guide and strength, and in this new and solemn relation, I humbly trust, His grace will be sufficient for me."

To the younger brothers and sisters of a family, the eldest sister stands in a deeply interesting and responsible relation. With wondering and admiring eyes they look up to her, and as she walks in loveliness and purity, the boy's heart throbs with exulting pride, as he exclaims, "She is my sister;" and the little girl lisps her sayings, or pleads her example, "Sister does so."

One of the most beautiful delineations of this character has been drawn by Miss Baillie, "The young, the sweet, the good, the brave Griseld." Her father was one of Scotland's patriots, who in perilous times fled his country and found a refuge in Holland, where his scanty means afforded but a meagre maintenance. The poem is founded upon fact, the Lady Griseld being one of the ancestral worthies of the Baillie family. Much is sung of the dauntless courage and daring deeds of the brave heroine, "though o'er her head had scarcely run her nineteenth year." But the simple, domestic virtues so graphically described by the accomplished authoress, furnish a fine example for my gentle readers, especially if troublous times should cloud their life's morning.

"And well, with ready hand and heart,
Each task of toilsome duty taking,
Did *one dear inmate* play her part,
The last asleep, the earliest waking.
Her hand each nightly couch prepared,
And frugal meal on which they fared;
Unfolding spread the servet white,
And decked the board with tankard bright.
Through fretted hose and garment rent,
Her tiny needle deftly went,

Till hateful penury, so graced,
 Was scarcely in their dwelling traced.
 With reverence to the old she clung,
 With sweet affection to the young.
 To her was crabb'd lesson said ;
 To her the sly petition made;
 To her was told each petty care;
 By her was lisped the tardy prayer,
 What time the urchin, half undrest
 And half asleep, was put to rest.

“ Who does not love to see the grandam mild
 Lesson with yearning looks the listening child?
 But 'tis a thing of saintlier nature,
 Amidst her friends of pigmy stature,
 To see the maid in youth's fair bloom
 A guardian sister's charge assume,
 And, like a touch of angel's bliss,
 Receive from each its grateful kiss.
 To see them, when their hour of love is past,
 Aside the grave demeanour cast;
 With her in mimic war they wrestle;
 Beneath her twisted robe they nestle;
 Upon her glowing cheek they revel,
 Low bended to their tiny level;
 While oft, her lovely neck bestriding,
 Crows some arch imp, like huntsman riding.
 This is a sight the coldest heart may feel;
 To make down rugged cheeks the kindly tear to steal.

“ But when the tollsome sun was set,
 And evening groups together met,
 Her feet still in the dance moved lightest,
 Her eye with merry glance beamed brightest,
 Her braided locks were coiled the neatest,
 Her carol song was trilled the sweetest;
 And round the fire, in winter cold,
 No archer tale than hers was told.
 And do not, gentle reader, chide,
 If I record her harmless pride,
 Who sacrificed the hours of sleep
 Some show of better times to keep;
 That, though as humble soldiers dight,
 With pointed cuff and collar white,
 A stripling brother might more trimly stand
 Like one of gentle race mixed with a homelier band.

“ And thus some happy years stole by;
 Adversity with virtue mated,
 Her state of low obscurity
 Set forth but as deep shadows, fated

By Heaven's high will to make the light
Of future skies appear more bright.

“ At length
From Britain's tale glad tidings came,
And her kind parent and herself depart
In royal Mary's gentle train.
And Britain's virtuous queen admired
Our gentle maid, and in her train
Of ladies willed her to remain;
What more could young ambition have desired?
But, like the blossom to the bough,
Or wall-flower to the ruin's brow,
Or tendril to the fostering stock,
Or sea-weed to the briny rock,
Or mistletoe to sacred tree,
Or daisy to the swarded lea,
So truly to her own she clung;
Nor cared for honours vain,
From courtly favour sprung.”

CHAPTER XVII.

THE ECONOMY OF HOME.

“ She loves a rainy day who sweeps the hearth,
And threads the busy needle, or applies
The scissors to the torn or threadbare sleeve;
Who blesses God that she has friends and home.”

BRAINARD.

THERE may be many servants in a household, and they may be under the vigilant superintendence of a hired house-keeper; but the order and elegance of the *ménage* will still depend upon the good judgment and correct taste of the lady of the mansion. If she be deficient, it will be visible in spite of the splendid decorations of her drawing-rooms, and the costly luxury of her table.

If the home-education of a young lady be not such as to fit her for any station, however high or however humble, it is incomplete. A discriminating mind, quickness of observation, strong judgment, correct taste and principles—these will enable her to accommodate herself gracefully and

cheerfully to the condition in life assigned by Providence. To fulfil its duties, she must have a practical knowledge of the whole economy of housewifery.

Lady reader, it may be that, in a missionary cottage on an island of the Pacific, you may set the example of a well-ordered house, and a neat frugal table, to savages, who are thus to be instructed in the home comforts of civilized life; or, in a refined and polished land, you may do the honours of a diplomatic palace, on the Continent, or among our brethren in the New World, or in some of the wide-spread colonies that still retain their allegiance to Great Britain, so that English manners and English hospitality be not contemned; or you may be compelled, upon the limited means that most young men have to offer, to maintain the dignity, neatness, and elegance of an establishment far inferior to the accustomed splendour of your father's house; or, upon the meagre stipend of a country minister, "to entertain strangers," and "be given to hospitality."

Keeping accounts, the order and regulation of family expenses, the table, servants, furniture, visitors, &c., &c., these must be learned under the paternal roof.

The expenses of a family must of course be regulated, in part, by the wealth and station of its head. That there may be unity of purpose, the husband and father should make his family sufficiently acquainted with his resources, and the style in which he wishes to live.

In order to acquire a habit of systematic expenditure, every young lady should, if possible, receive a stated allowance for her personal expenses; be this large or small, a part of it—how large a part depends upon the charity and self-denial of the donor—should be devoted to benevolent purposes. This gives a freedom and a pleasure to acts of charity which cannot be enjoyed where the demands are made upon a parent, and the bounty thus only passes through the hands of the merely nominal donor.

However large your allowance may be, unless you are systematic in its expenditure, trouble and perplexity will harass you. If, at the beginning of the year, you are need-

lessly extravagant, its close will find you without the means of purchasing even a pair of gloves. With splendid shawls and rich dresses, which have exhausted your funds, soiled gloves and untidy shoes are not in keeping. The former can only serve to attract the eye to what may breed contempt, but certainly cannot excite admiration. These incongruities will frequently occur, if you do not carefully calculate all the articles which are indispensable to your ward-robe.

Beside this care of her own accounts and expenditures, a daughter should sometimes be allowed to keep "The House Book," as it is called. By so doing, she will learn the rate of servants' wages, of all the articles for family use and for the table. Of these things most young married women are so ignorant, that they might be cheated to almost any extent by trades-people and servants. What, for instance, do they know of the prices of coals, wood, bread, potatoes, &c., &c. ! My young lady reader will smile, perhaps contemptuously, at the idea that any such knowledge could come within her province. But would she wish, as a wife, to resign that domestic sceptre, which, within her own proper sphere, is so graceful in woman's hand ! Even if the husband and father were prepared to undertake such duties, the head of a family is not always at home ; and when there, the all-absorbing duties of a profession may render such cares burdensome, and an obliging wife or daughter will endeavour to relieve him, rather than to add to his cares. If the mistress of a family trust entirely to servants to make purchases, while herself ignorant of prices, she places before them too great a temptation to dishonesty. If the grocer's book is sent, month after month, where an account is kept open, without examination—if butchers' and fishmongers' bills are suffered to run on from quarter to quarter without being paid (seeming at last enormous, and discharged reluctantly)—if servants' wages are called for just when they please, sometimes receiving more than is due, and at others falling short of it—how are family expenses to be regulated ! Often, in this manner, everything

is left to take care of itself, and by the wastefulness and extravagance resulting from such a course, thousands have been ruined. It was Napoleon's custom, even when Emperor of France, to inquire the price of every article used for his household, and to make accurate calculations with regard to the necessary quantity to be consumed. Precisely the same course, even to the minutest details, was followed by Frederic the Great of Prussia. It may be said that this was royal meanness; nevertheless, it prevented fraud and dishonesty. Many think it a mark of gentility, as well as of generosity, to be regardless of economy. They think that spending money with reckless freedom proves that they have always been accustomed to wealth. It is proverbial that the sons of misers are spendthrifts, and men who have acquired wealth suddenly generally spend it rapidly; while they who have lived year after year in the same respectable style, usually impart to their children their own habits of regular systematic economy. But a practical example of the cares and errors of a young housekeeper will serve better than many pages of advice, to impress on our readers the value of a careful economy in the minutest affairs of daily life.

WHERE THE MONEY GOES.

There was one thing that Mr. Barnaby could not, as he said, "make out;" and that was, where all his money went to. He was not extravagant; nor could such a charge be brought against any member of his family. They did not give parties in winter, nor go to the springs nor the sea-shore during the summer season. They did not keep a carriage, nor buy fine furniture, nor indulge in costly dressing. And yet, though Mr. Barnaby's receipts were nearly four hundred pounds a-year, the 31st of December usually found him with an empty purse. This was the more surprising, as the Malcolms, next door, indulged in many things which the Barnabys would have considered extravagant; though the Malcolms had an income of only three hundred pounds per annum. And, what was more,

Malcolm was putting sixty pounds in the savings' bank every year.

"I cannot make it out," said Mr. Barnaby, one New-Year's eve, as he cast up the cash column of his annual expenses. "Four hundred and twenty-four pounds have gone since last December. But where has it gone? that's the question."

"I am sure I have not spent it," meekly replied Mrs. Barnaby, who always felt, when any allusion was made to the amount of money expended, as if her husband designed to charge her with extravagance.

"I know that, Aggy," said Mr. Barnaby, who understood, in a moment, how his wife felt. "I know that you have not spent anything more than is necessary. But, for all that, the cost of living has been enormous. We have only two more in the family than Malcolm, whose salary is but three hundred pounds; and, what is altogether unaccountable, while I have not forty shillings in my pocket, he has fully sixty pounds of his year's salary snugly deposited in the bank."

"I cannot understand it," sighed Mrs. Barnaby. "I am sure we do not indulge in any extravagances. We have not bought an article of new furniture during the year; while the Malcolms have had a beautiful sofa, a set of candelabras, a large mahogany rocking-chair, and a dressing bureau for which they paid five pounds."

"I do not know how it is!" said Mr. Barnaby.

"And that is not all," continued his wife. "Mrs. Malcolm has bought an elegant muff and boa, a velvet mantilla, and a pin and bracelet worth five pounds at the least."

"It is unaccountable! We have had none of these things, and yet our expenses outrun theirs some hundred and sixty pounds! It really makes me unhappy. There is a leak somewhere; but, though I have searched for it long and anxiously, I cannot find it out."

"Still, we must remember," said Mrs. Barnaby, "that we have two more in our family, and one of them an extra servant, whose wages and board do not come to less than

thirty pounds a-year; and the additional child will swell the sum, put the expense at the lowest possible point, by an addition of fifteen pounds per annum. Then we pay fifteen pounds more rent than the Malcolms. So you see, that in these three items we make up a sum of sixty pounds."

"Yes, but that is not a hundred and sixty."

"No, although it is a very important sum for which I have accounted. Half of it I have resolved to save. Mrs. Malcolm does with two girls, and I ought to get along with the same number. I will send Hannah away next week."

"Indeed, Aggy, you will do no such thing," replied Mr. Barnaby, in a positive voice. "You are worn down with the toil and care of the children as it is, and must not think of dispensing with Hannah. That would be a poor way to save."

"But I do not see why I cannot do with less help as well as other people. There is Mrs. Jones over the way, with as many children as I have, and she only keeps one servant."

"I am sorry for her; that is all I have to say on the subject. Her husband's income is less than half what I receive. We can afford three domestics as well as they can afford one. No, no, Aggy. If we are to retrench at any point, it must not be in the one you propose."

"I see no other way of reducing our expenses," sighed Mrs. Barnaby.

"Then let them go on as they are going, and we will be thankful for an income sufficient to meet our wants."

"But we ought to be saving something. We ought to be laying up sixty or eighty pounds every year."

"I wish we could do so. However, as we cannot, there is no use in making ourselves unhappy in consequence. We shall be as well off fifty years hence as though we laid by two hundred pounds per annum."

Mrs. Barnaby looked serious and unhappy, as she sat, without replying to her husband's last remark; while Mr. Barnaby, regretting now that he had introduced the subject, sought to change it for one that was more agreeable. His efforts to do so were not very successful, and the evening

of the New-Year was passed in reflections that were far from being pleasant to either party.

Although neither Mr. nor Mrs. Barnaby were able to answer the question, "Where does the money go?" we think the reader will be at no loss to make out the matter, after we enlighten him a little as to the mode in which the financial affairs of the family were conducted.

On the morning that succeeded to the evening on which we have introduced Mr. and Mrs. Barnaby, the former, as was his custom, went to market. As he walked along, he run over in his mind the various articles he must purchase; and being in something of an economical mood, he summed up the amount they would probably cost. When he left the market-house, he had spent twelve shillings instead of seven, which latter sum had fully covered, in his previous estimate, all the articles that were really wanted. How the additional five shillings came to be added, was in this wise. A loin of veal had been determined upon, which was not to cost more than four shillings; but a fine fat pair of chickens met his eyes, and the cost was only one shilling more than the veal, which was such a trifle that he decided at once in favour of the chickens. Having bought the chickens, to add a bundle of celery and a quart of cranberries was the most natural thing in the world, and these took one shilling more, to say nothing of the pound of sugar that would be required to sweeten the cranberries. The man who had the chickens to sell, had also some very nice honey, the sight of which created in the mind of Mr. Barnaby the desire to have some. The price was fourteen pence a pound; but what of that? Mr. Barnaby had no means of taking it home, but Mr. Barnaby was a man of expedients. He never liked to be foiled in anything, and was, therefore, rarely at a loss for some mode of accomplishing his ends. Just across from the market-house was the shop of a tin-man; and, as Mr. Barnaby looked up, he saw the bright tin kettles, of all sizes and shapes, hanging before his door.

"I have it," said he, speaking aloud his thoughts. "Such articles are always useful in a family."

So he walked across to the tinman's, and bought a small kettle, and then back and had a pound of honey placed therein to be sent home. After he had purchased what vegetables he had designed, some dried Lima beans presented themselves, and a quart was taken, as the price was but fifteen pence. Some cakes and candies for the children took a shilling more. Thus it was that twelve shillings were spent, instead of seven, the sum at first decided upon as sufficient.

When Mr. Barnaby went to market, he put a pound note in his pocket. On returning home, and counting over his change, he could find but eight shillings.

"That can't be," he said to himself, searching first in one pocket and then in another. "I have not spent twelve shillings."

But nowhere could he turn up another shilling.

"Somebody must have given me wrong change." This was the most reasonable conclusion to which he could come, after adding up the cost of the various articles purchased, and forgetting to include the tin kettle, the cakes and candies for the children, and the quart of Lima beans.

"Had you not better take your umbrella with you?" said Mrs. Barnaby to her husband, as the latter prepared to leave for his place of business. "It looks very much like a storm."

Mr. Barnaby opened the door and glanced up at the sky.

"I don't think it will rain."

"It will be wisest to take your umbrella. If it does not rain, no harm will be done; and if it should rain, you will save yourself from being wet."

Mr. Barnaby paused a moment to think, and then said, as he stepped out, "I'll risk it."

On his way to his office, Mr. Barnaby passed a window in which were some very handsome bouquets of artificial flowers made from tissue-paper. He paused to admire, and then went in to ask the price. Once inside of the store in which the bouquets were sold, and in the power of a saleswoman who knew her man the moment he entered,

there was no such thing as retiring without becoming the owner of a splendid bunch of flowers, at the moderate cost of two shillings, which the shop-woman promised to send home immediately.

"Cheap enough," said Barnaby to himself, as he left the shop. "How many shillings have I spent in real flowers that faded, and became worthless in a day; but these will retain their beauty for years. Aggy will be delighted with them!"

During the morning, Mr. Barnaby had occasion to purchase some articles of stationery. While waiting to have them made up into a package, after selecting what he wanted, he commenced looking over the books that were displayed upon the counter.

"Just the thing for Tom," he said aloud, as he opened a book containing a number of gaily-painted pictures. "How much is it?"

"Only seven and sixpence."

"You may tie it up for me." And he tossed the book to the man who stood behind the counter.

Before twelve o'clock, the rain, which Mr. Barnaby's wife had predicted, began to fall. At one it was still coming down freely, and at two, Mr. Barnaby's dinner hour, there was no sign of abatement. Mr. Barnaby opened the door of his office and gazed up at the leaden sky; he then looked across the street, and saw, hanging before a door, just the article he wanted—an umbrella. To get possession of this article, he must, of course, purchase it. But he had two umbrellas at home now.

"What if I have?" said he to himself, as the fact was presented to his mind. "It is here that I want an umbrella."

Not long was the question of buying another umbrella debated. He could not lose his dinner, especially as a fine pair of fat chickens were to be served; and it was raining too hard to think of venturing on the journey home without some protection. He might go home in a cab for two shillings, but then the money would be gone as certainly as if it were thrown into the street. If, on the contrary, he were

to buy an umbrella, even though it cost more, he would be in possession of a useful article, that would have to be bought, as the natural result of the wear and tear of those he now had on hand, before a twelvemonth elapsed. Moreover, he reflected, for as large a family as his, three or four umbrellas were almost indispensable.

Arrived at this conclusion, Mr. Barnaby ran across the street, and supplied himself with a cheap cotton umbrella, at an expense of three shillings.

"Where does the money go?" said Mr. Barnaby that evening, as he searched his pockets, and could find but a solitary sixpence remaining of the cash he had taken from his secretary in the morning. "I cannot understand it. Certainly I have not spent twenty shillings." Then he took a piece of paper and his pencil, and tried to "figure it up." But he did not get beyond sixteen shillings; and he would almost have taken his oath that he had not spent a copper more. As for the deficit, that must have occurred through his having received wrong change.

Here the reader has a history of one day's spendings; and he will perceive that from eight to ten shillings passed from the hands of Mr. Barnaby that had better have remained in his possession. A system like this, pursued every day in the year, would use up from one hundred and fifty to two hundred pounds, and there would be little or nothing to show for it in the end. In the day's expenditure, four shillings had gone, and Mr. Barnaby's memory was entirely at fault in regard to the manner of its disappearance. Four shillings thus wasted each day, would leave, in the annual expense, not less than twelve hundred shillings, or sixty pounds, unaccounted for. But Mr. Barnaby had never looked at the matter in this light. He did not reflect, that a shilling uselessly spent every day is equal to upwards of eighteen pounds thrown away in the year.

On the next morning, Mr. Barnaby again went to market, and, as was usual with him, turned over in his mind the various articles he must buy, and fixed upon the sum that would meet all that was really wanted. But, as on the day

before, he exceeded this amount. The excess was four shillings, and the articles purchased could all have been left in the market-house, without any member of Mr. Barnaby's family experiencing the smallest deprivation in comfort or health.

"What a beautiful bunch of flowers!" said Mrs. Barnaby to her husband, for the tenth time, as they stood together in the parlour after breakfast. "What a pity it is we have not a glass vase to cover them! They would look so sweet!"

"Would they not?" was all the reply Mr. Barnaby made; but the idea suggested by his wife did not die with the sound of her voice. It entered his mind, and lived there. In imagination he saw that bouquet of flowers—tissue-paper though they were—within a glass vase, their beauty increased twofold.

Mr. Barnaby did not go direct to his office on leaving home that morning, but walked considerably out of his way, in order to visit a china-store. Before leaving the store, his purse was lighter by eight shillings, that sum having been expended for a glass to cover the bouquet of paper flowers bought for two.

As Mr. Barnaby walked along, thinking how gratified his wife would be when the vase was brought home, he passed a pickling and preserving establishment, and saw in the window jars of fruit and vegetables of various kinds, preserved in the condition they were on being taken from the tree. One of these jars was marked "Cauliflower." Mr. Barnaby liked cauliflower very much, and had them on his table from the time they were to be bought four for a shilling, until frost withered the last of them. To have a taste of the delightful vegetable once during the winter could hardly be called extravagance—so thought Mr. Barnaby—even if it did cost something to procure the gratification. So in he went, without debating the matter, and bought a small jar for two shillings. While the shopkeeper was selecting his change, he took up a small bottle containing less than half a pint, marked "Strawberries."

"Have these the natural flavour?" he inquired.

"O yes," replied the shopkeeper. "They have been hermetically sealed, after exhausting the air, and are in just the state they were when taken from the plants. I opened a bottle yesterday, and found them delicious."

"What is the price of this bottle?"

"Half-a-crown."

"How better can I surprise and delight Aggy," said Mr. Barnaby to himself, "than by buying her some of these strawberries?"

That question settled the matter, and Mr. Barnaby's purse was soon lighter by another half-crown. The cauliflower and strawberries were then ordered to be sent home, and Mr. Barnaby, feeling very comfortable in mind, proceeded to his office, and entered upon the business of the day. Between that and nightfall, he gave a shilling to a beggar who got drunk on the money, bought half-a-crown's worth of toys for the children, over which they disputed as soon as they received them, and which were all broken up and thrown away in less than twenty-four hours, and ordered home a shilling's worth of buns for tea, and found, on sitting down to supper, that his wife had baked enough cake to last the whole family for three or four days.

So passed the second day of the new year; and when, in the evening, reflection came, and Mr. Barnaby found twenty-eight shillings less in his purse than when he went out in the morning, he was even more at a loss than on the day before to account for the deficiency. In attempting to sum up the various expenditures into which he had been led, he could not make out more than twenty-two shillings; and his mind remained totally in the dark as to the balance.

On the third day—but we will not weary the reader by minutely detailing the process by which Mr. Barnaby got rid of his money on the third, fourth, fifth, and sixth days of the new year. What we have given will furnish a clew to unravel the mystery of his heavy expenses, and show, what he was himself unable to find out, where the

money went. The amount uselessly spent, or that might have been saved without any abridgement of physical or mental comfort, during those six days, was just three pounds, or at the rate of one hundred and fifty-six pounds a-year.

The manner of proceeding during this one week, shows exactly how Mr. Barnaby conducted his affairs. Not a day passed that he did not waste from four or five to twelve shillings in trifles, to gratify a bad habit of desiring to have every little thing he saw, instead of waiting until real wants tugged at his purse-strings.

Mrs. Barnaby's economy was not much better. She, too, had acquired the same habit, and sixpences and shillings dropped daily from her fingers, as if they were of but small account.

Thus it went on, as it had been going for years; and when the next 31st of December arrived, and Mr. Barnaby examined his expense account, he found that four hundred pounds had vanished, and that scarcely a vestige of any good it had brought them remained. There had been no additions, except very unimportant ones, to their furniture; no silver plate nor fine jewellery had been purchased; nor had either Mr. or Mrs. Barnaby indulged in any extravagance of dress.

"Where does the money go?" again asked Mr. Barnaby, in a kind of despairing tone.

"I am sure I cannot tell," sadly replied his wife. "It seems impossible that we could have spent so much. What is there to show for it? Nothing!"

"Nothing at all! That makes the great mystery. Four hundred pounds!"

While they yet conversed, their neighbours, the Malcoms, dropped in to sit an hour. No very long time passed before the subject uppermost in the minds of the Barnabys showed itself.

"How is it," said Mr. Barnaby, "that you are able to live on so much less in the year than we can, and yet appear to spend more?"

Mrs. Malcolm smiled, and said that she was not aware that such was really the case.

"But I know that it is so," returned Mr. Barnaby. "You do not spend as much as we do, by at least a hundred and fifty pounds."

"Probably you put our expenses considerably below what they really are."

"No, I apprehend not. I suppose it costs you from two hundred and forty to two hundred and fifty pounds a-year."

"Yes. That is pretty near the mark."

"I should not like to say how much it really does cost us; but I can assure you it is far beyond that. As to where the money goes, I am entirely in the dark. We have nothing to show for it. I wish you would impart to us your system of economy," said Mr. Barnaby, smiling. "If I could get through the year for three hundred pounds, I would be perfectly satisfied."

"I have no particular system," replied Mr. Malcolm, "unless you call taking care of the little leaks in the cash a system. When a boy, I lived with a shrewd old farmer in the country, who belonged to the 'save-your-pennies-and-the-pounds-will-take-care-of-themselves' school. One autumn, in putting up cider, he trusted to rather a rickety-looking barrel, which showed a disposition to leak. 'I think it will do,' he said, thoughtfully eyeing the barrel after the cider had been poured into it, and noticing that in two or three places small streams were oozing forth. 'The barrel is a little loose, but it will soon swell.' And so the barrel was placed in the dark cellar with two or three others, for the winter's supply. Two barrels were tapped one after another, and they yielded the full amount of liquor that had been committed to their charge. But on coming to the third barrel, and taking hold of it to bring it forward to a better position, it was found to be empty. 'Aha!' said the old farmer, 'I see how it is. I thought that leak of no consequence, but it has wasted the whole barrel of cider. There's a lesson for you, John,' he added, turning to me. 'Take care of the little leaks in your pocket, when you grow up

and have money to spend, for it is them that run away with most men's property.' I understood him as fully as if he had read me a homily of an hour long. All useless expenditures I now call leaks, and stop them up immediately."

"No doubt we spend a great many shillings that might be saved in the year," said Mr. Barnaby; "but I cannot conceive how all the leaks in our pockets could let out a hundred pounds in twelve months."

"It is an easy matter for us to let a hundred pounds leak out, and yet scarcely be aware of the daily waste," replied Mr. Malcom. "A single crown spent every day, that might be saved, gives three hundred pounds in a year."

"True. But a man could hardly let that much leak away without observing it."

"It is very possible. Suppose you add on, daily, to each of your three meals, a shilling more than is necessary—and this may be done so easily as scarcely to be noticed—how much do you think it would be in a year? Why, the important sum of full fifty-four pounds."

"Is it possible?" Mr. Barnaby looked surprised.

"Even so."

"In the matter of desserts alone," said Mrs. Malcom, coming in with a remark, "which rather injures than conduces to health, half-a-crown a-day, in a family as large as yours, may be easily spent."

"Don't you have a dessert after dinner?" inquired Mrs. Barnaby, in a tone of surprise.

"Not every day," answered Mrs. Malcom.

"I don't believe Mr. Barnaby would think that he had dined, if he had not a dessert on the table."

"Perhaps not," replied Mr. Barnaby; "for then my first course would digest so easily that it would be hard to imagine that I had eaten anything. The fact is, now that I reflect upon it, these desserts are to my stomach as the extra pound that broke the camel's back. I do not believe I would have a dyspeptic symptom, if I did not touch puddings, pies, sweetmeats, nuts, and raisins, blanc-manges, and a hundred and one other things that my good wife prepares

for our gratification, and which I eat after my appetite has been satiated on plain and more substantial food."

"Upon my word!" exclaimed Mrs. Barnaby. "And so, after all, these are the thanks I am to receive for my trouble. Assuredly if it was not for you, I would not trouble myself every day about a dessert for dinner."

"And at a cost of upwards of thirty pounds a-year," returned Mr. Barnaby, good-humouredly. "I begin to see a little of the way in which the money goes."

"There are so many ways in which we are obliged to spend money," said Mr. Malcom, "that unless we are watchful, a little will leak out at a dozen points every day, and show, in the end, although we remain all unconscious of the waste that is going on, an alarming deficiency. When I first entered upon life, I saw how this was in my own case. Sixpences, shillings, and even half-crowns, did not seem of much importance; though of fives, tens, and twenties, I was very careful. The consequence was, that the small change kept constantly running away; and, in the end, the fives, tens, and twenties had mysteriously disappeared. I saw that this would not do, and reformed the system. I took care of the small sums, and soon found that I always had large sums to spend for things actually needful, and had really more satisfaction in what I obtained with my money than I had before."

"But it is so hard," said Mrs. Barnaby, "to be careful of the sixpences, without growing mean and penurious, and even seeking to save at the expense of others' just rights."

"Perhaps it is," replied Mrs. Malcom. "But this consequence need not follow. All we have to do is, to deny ourselves the indulgence of a weak desire to spend money for little articles that we could do without and not abridge our comfort in the least, and we will find enough left in our purses to remove us from the temptation to be unjust to others."

"Taking care of the pennies, then, and leaving the pounds to the care of themselves, is your system," remarked Mr.

"Yes," answered Mr. Malcolm. "That is our system, and we have found it to work very well. We not only enjoy every comfort we could reasonably desire, but have nearly five hundred pounds in the bank."

"And yet your salary is only three hundred pounds a year."

"That is all."

"While my income is over four hundred, and I have not a shilling left when the 31st of December arrives. But I see where the leak is. I understand now, clearly, how the money goes; and, by the help of a good resolution, I will stop the leak."

How far Mr. and Mrs. Barnaby were successful in stopping the leak, we do not know. It is hard to reform confirmed habits of any kind, and we are afraid that they found the task assumed a hard one. But if they conquered in the attempt, their reward was ample, compared to the amount of self-denial required for the achievement.*

Having learnt the prices of articles of home consumption, and the quantity necessary for an ample supply, you may be able to regulate your expenses. You will know how your table should be furnished on ordinary and extraordinary occasions, avoiding the extremes of niggardly frugality and wasteful superfluity. You will find that a skilful manager purchases most articles by large quantities, as they are thus reduced in price; besides the saving of time thereby effected.

The better to understand what to order for the table, acquire some insight into the mysteries of the culinary department. If your delicate fingers have hitherto only been familiar with the piano and harp, embroidery and letter-paper, can you bring them into contact with vulgar butter and sugar, eggs and flour? Horrible! Yet you may go where the aid of well-trained cooks is not to be had; and may often find yourself in circumstances where such

* From "Stories for Young Housekeepers," by T. S. Arthur.

knowledge will prove a source of comfort to yourself and all around you. Nor should it ever be forgot, that the varying tide of fortune may leave many who now ride triumphantly on the top of the wave upon a barren strand.

Our grandmothers, the ladies of langsyne, were exceedingly notable; their pride in pastry, puddings, pickles, preserves, and the rest of the category, was certainly more sensible than the boasted ignorance of their degenerate daughters. Sensible men will assure you, that it is no proof of talents, good sense, or good taste, to despise the manipulations of the pantry and kitchen. A good housekeeper need not be a mere domestic drudge; if compelled to devote some hours every day to active employment, it would doubtless be an antidote to dyspepsia and ennui, and need not lessen her refinement of mind and manners. A good "Cook's Oracle" should belong to every, educated woman's library, not displaying its homely face among the elegant titled nobility of the drawing-room, or respectable gentry of the parlour library, but upon the kitchen book-shelf, by the side of the Bible, Christian Repository, Almanac, &c. Many such receipt-books have been compiled for housekeepers, but they must be tested by actual experiment before they can be relied upon. A young lady should be allowed to make these experiments under her mother's supervision. If a daughter can relieve her mother by sometimes taking her place, it will be a mutual advantage.

Kindness to servants—genuine, judicious kindness—is not the most common thing in the world. In your father's house, be careful not to tax them too heavily; be considerate for their welfare, and endeavour to gain their respect and good-will.

You can scarcely conceive of the labour you may save them by neatness and carefulness, by putting your books, working materials, and wearing-apparel in their proper places, when you have done using them, by early rising and early retiring. Never ring for a servant unless it be absolutely necessary; consider whether you have a right to

make even your own waiting-maid take forty steps to save yourself one. Nothing shows a person's ill-breeding more plainly than a harsh, imperious manner towards servants. Knowing how much more agreeable it is to be requested than commanded, it would seem as if every one might say, "Will you do this!" or even, "Please do that;" and there would be no want of propriety in saying, "Will you have the kindness to do it!" Human nature resents the imperative mood, but yields a ready acquiescence to gentle entreaty. You must not suppose all servants as a matter of course merely mercenary; they may serve with affection, and possess a keen sensibility to kindness. An amiable dignity of deportment, joined with considerateness, and a hearty desire for their good, may secure faithful, humble allies, whose interests are identified with your own. This happy union is sometimes secured in this country. The yoke of servitude is often rendered galling by the meanness and vulgarity of the master and mistress; whereas, in the kindly relations of master and servant in a well-regulated family, the mutual tie begets a community of feeling, and the servants identify themselves with the family, rejoicing in its welfare, and sympathizing in all its sorrows. This desirable state of things rests mainly with the wife and daughters to effect. Avoiding that familiarity which the old proverb says "breeds contempt," consider what is really due to the feelings and character of a faithful domestic, and demonstrate by your conduct, that you have no contempt for those whom Providence has placed in a subordinate station, and that you recognise no vulgarity but such as arises from a low and vicious character. By uniform sweetness of temper, a grateful acknowledgment of faithful services, and a conscientious regard for their temporal and eternal welfare, you may promote their happiness, and lighten the privations or trials incident to their condition.

The freedom of our country, its liberal institutions, and, much more, its moral condition and domestic virtues, place unmarried women in a less restricted and more influential situation than they enjoy elsewhere. Yet, while under the

paternal roof, there is no propriety in their receiving company without the countenance of their parents. All invitations should be given out in the name of the head of the family, and the delicacy and modesty of a young lady will prevent her from monopolizing the attention of her mother's guests, old or young. There is, however, an opposite extreme, where young ladies pay no civilities to their parents' visitors, but either whisper by themselves in a corner, or sit in a formidable row, like dumb, uninterested spectators. At a dinner-table, at home or abroad, you are expected to be an attentive listener, or at most an intelligent questioner; by no means to take the lead in conversation. At home, you may endeavour to draw out the modest and diffident, and to relieve them from awkward silence; but set before your mind some worthier aim than the ability to talk in a party to half a dozen beaux at once, and find them all some employment! Do you feel dissatisfied unless you create a sensation and attract much notice! Do not think the men whose admiration you claim cannot perceive your motives.

It is almost insulting to a guest to invite him just to make a display of an elegant, richly furnished house, or in any other way to extort from him the tax of admiration and flattery. The frank cordiality of old-fashioned hospitality is a thousand times more acceptable. As your guest, it is his or her gratification you must seek; and your highest reward should be in seeing that all have gone away well pleased and gratified, at whatever cost of self-denial.

The substantial comfort of a house depends mostly upon its mistress; but its graceful elegance is frequently imparted by the younger members. The arrangement of furniture, books, pictures, prints, and the care of them, may devolve upon young ladies. Even the arrangement of a vase of flowers, and the placing of it, may tell favourably of the taste of the presiding genius of the drawing-room.

Although domestic economy must necessarily occupy much of a woman's time and thoughts, it should be made as seldom as possible the subject of conversation. The

affairs of the kitchen should never be discussed in the parlour, or at table. The regularity, order, and smoothness with which the machinery operates should be perceived only as it is upon the face of a watch, by the effects produced. A man of studious habits, who is much at home, should never be annoyed with the bustle of notable housewifery, the complaints that might hourly be made of the carelessness of servants, and the horrors of dust and cobwebs. The merits or demerits of servants are sometimes made the subject of conversation in society; but young ladies, it is hoped, have too much taste and refinement to choose such a topic.

There is little danger, under the present system of intellectual culture, that a young lady will become too ambitious to excel in housewifery; the danger is, that, despising the homely but useful knowledge, you will in time bring discomfort and discredit to that home where confiding love has placed you.

"Charlotte," said a lately married man to his young wife, "my classmates, F—— and N——, are in town, and I have invited them to dine with us to-day. I have been to market this morning," said he, still retaining some of his old habits of bachelorship in this respect, "and I will give you the bill of fare; a calf's head for my favourite soup, beef, pigeons, oysters, and a fine turbot. You must order the cook to do everything according to your own liking, and prepare such a dessert as suits your own taste. Our guests are both bachelors, and N—— has a foolish notion that girls now-a-days know nothing that they ought to know. I wish you, my dear, to show him that one, at least, does honour to her husband's choice."

The happy husband, with a look of trustful affection, bade his wife good-morning, saying that he should not see her again until he had the pleasure of introducing his old friends, at dinner-time.

Charlotte was in trepidation. Her cook, a stout, wholesome-looking country-girl, was unskilled beyond the most

simple cookery; the mistress did not like to lose respect by betraying ignorance. The blushing honours of a house-keeper were still in their first week's freshness. "What shall I do! what shall I do!" she mentally exclaimed. After musing a while, the thought struck her, "I will go and ask mamma." On went bonnet and shawl, and off went Charlotte to confess her embarrassment and ask advice. "It is all easy enough," said mamma; "you have my excellent receipt for mock turtle-soup. Then you must have the turbot boiled, the beef roasted, the oysters fried in batter, and the pigeons stuffed, stewed, and browned." Home went Charlotte, saying over her lesson of boiled, stewed, and roasted, all the way. She summoned the cook: "Sally, we have company to dine to-day; I wish to give you some directions about the dinner. Here is my excellent receipt for turtle-soup." "O, dear me!" exclaimed Sally, "I never heard of turning a calf's head into a turtle before." "It is a fine soup, Sally; be patient, and I will show you how," continued Charlotte, with becoming dignity, although somewhat disconcerted. "Listen now; the beef, yes, the beef must be boiled, the turbot roasted, the oysters stewed and browned, and the pigeons fried in batter." "The pigeons fried in batter! La me! what queer ways they do have in this town!" exclaimed the unsophisticated cook. "Different places have different modes, my good girl; I dare say you will do very well. We dine an hour later than usual to-day, and you will have plenty of time."

Sally was a shrewd girl, and suspecting that her mistress did not know quite as much as she pretended, determined to follow the directions she had given, come what might. Charlotte, putting on her neat brown-linen apron, went to work with right good-will. Receipt-book in hand, she got together the variety of ingredients and condiments for the mock-turtle soup, and read the directions for the suitable preparation of them to the attentive Sally, who then applied herself with all her might to boiling, roasting, stewing, and frying, according to her mistress's orders.

Having thus discharged her arduous task, perfectly to her

own satisfaction, Charlotte made choice of fruits and sweetmeats for dessert, and, to relieve the cook, she undertook to make custards and a whip-syllabub herself. Before they were finished, the clock struck four ! It was but an hour to dinner ; five o'clock was a late dinner-hour in the good town of —. When she had seen that the table was spread, and given orders to the waiter for the arrangement of her beautiful dessert, which she looked at again and again with satisfied pride, she had only fifteen minutes for her toilet—a task which usually occupied nearly an hour. The company arrived before it was completed, and the husband looked disappointed at not finding his wife in the drawing-room. Still more disappointed and chagrined was he when she did appear, heated by the unusual occupation of the morning, flurried by her hasty toilet, and anxious for the success of her dinner ; her face looked flushed, and absolutely swollen, and her manners were as destitute of their usually graceful politeness as possible. F—— and N—— looked surprised, for they had heard much of the beauty and accomplishments of their friend's wife. Conversation flagged, and yet the servant came not to announce the wished-for relief ; minutes seemed hours to Charlotte ; her husband fidgeted and looked anxiously at N——, who, in spite of his customary good-breeding, had a positively saucy look, that seemed to say, "So much for the housewifery of these very accomplished women." At length, however, the servant announced that dinner was ready ; the doors were thrown open, and the smoking viands were welcomed by all ; for long waiting had given them keen appetites.

The soup was dark as midnight, having derived its superlative blackness from burned instead of browned sugar, and an extra quantity of port-wine. However, it passed off tolerably well ; even an experienced gourmand would have pronounced it only a trifle too bitter, and a trifle too acid.

The soup discussed and removed, the master of the house cast his eye over the table, but not a dish could he recognize. "This is some abominable French cookery," thought he, "where everything is intentionally disguised ; however,

I must undertake to carve." Before him stood a shapeless mass of pinkish and yellowish stuff, floating in a puddle of grease, which threatened to overflow the platter. Fish-knife in hand, he gazed at it awhile; what could it be? Why, boiled beef, to be sure; the large sirloin of fat beef boiled to rags, without a particle of salt—the bones all nicely removed. He looked for the excellent turbot. The dark *debris* of something of the fish kind certainly lay upon the opposite platter, for there was the head at least—the bones roasted to wonderful brownness. There was still hope that the pigeons might be eatable. A parcel of strange-looking dumplings made up a side-dish, but no birds were discoverable; neither could he form a conjecture as to the contents of the opposite dish—little dark, shrivelled things, like nothing of the fish or flesh kind. Not a vegetable appeared, for Charlotte had forgotten to order them, and Sally obeyed orders.

Relieved from embarrassment by the success of her soup, Charlotte had recovered her usual ease, and was talking quite agreeably with N——, when she was startled by an unwonted exclamation of anger from her husband.

"What have we got here? Madam, please to have your cook called, to tell us what villanous stuff she has placed before us; for the life of me, I cannot discover."

Poor Charlotte, utterly confounded, bade the servant call Sally. The girl appeared, her arms akimbo, and an expression of irrepressible drollery lurking about her mouth. "Woman!" exclaimed the enraged husband, "what messes have you given us in place of what I sent home for dinner?" "Why! there's just what you sent home, cooked exactly as missus ordered it to be done. My rule is, 'Obey orders.' I said it over and over, till I got it by heart"—pointing to each dish—"boiled beef, roasted fish, pigeons fried in batter, and oysters stewed and browned," courtesying low.

It was impossible longer to refrain from laughter. The irritated husband burst forth into a peal, in which he was joined by his guests, and even the servant tittered, while Charlotte, no longer able to endure the mortifying scene,

burst into tears, and retreated to her own chamber. The mangled and unsavoury messes were removed, and soon the sweet course and dessert were upon the table. The friends merrily finished their dinner, or rather substituted the dessert, which really did credit to Charlotte, who, nevertheless, could not be prevailed upon again to make her appearance.

CHAPTER XVIII.

DRESS.

"My yellow silk petticoat looped up with laurel,
So elegant—yellow and green!

My train of blue satin! (Judiciously chosen,

'Twill make a pelisse in the spring,)

And then my red feathers! I'm sure, Lady Susan,

I must be remarked by the king."

T. H. BAILEY.

THE satirists of every age have considered woman's vanity and love of dress legitimate subjects for their keenest strokes. The enormous hoops, crape cushioned head-dresses, furbelows, powder, and patches of the days of Addison and Goldsmith, only gave place to other fantastic modes, which have in turn called forth the ridicule of lesser wits down to the present day. Whether all their poignant witticisms ever lessened the number of patches, made "top-knots come down," or reduced the size of a sleeve, is somewhat doubtful. Fashion is a goddess who will not be laughed out of countenance. Her frown is terrific; her votaries proclaim from her high places, "It is better to be out of the world than out of the fashion."

As a first rule, then (though last in importance), let your dress be in the fashion, provided always that it does not infringe upon any of the following rules; namely:—

2. Let dress be adapted to the season of the year. Many a bright and beautiful girl has gone down to an early grave

in consequence of neglecting to guard against the inclemencies of this changing climate. You have hitherto been watched by the vigilant eye of maternal affection; now your life is, in a measure, in your own keeping—yes, your very life—for one single night's imprudence in laying aside a warm garment might prove fatal. Do not object to any precautions for the preservation of health, because they have a clumsy appearance. Flannels are indispensable the greater part of the year. India-rubber, fur, and thick-soled shoes, should be worn much oftener than they are. How absurd to risk health, and life itself, for the sake of having a foot look an eighth of an inch smaller! How preposterous to be exposed to an atmosphere near zero, wearing thin silk stockings, and expect to escape uninjured! Not only absurd and preposterous, but absolutely wicked. We have no right thus to tamper with life.

3. The dress should not fit so tightly as to impede motion or respiration. It is believed that the evils of tight-lacing have been so repeatedly faithfully delineated within the last few years, that none can be ignorant of them. Thus forewarned, if you continue a practice so destructive to health, life, and even to true beauty—a lingering suicide—surely a fearful account must be rendered to Him whose laws are thus daringly violated.

4. Dress should be neat. Neatness and cleanliness have, not unfitly, been said to be next to the cardinal virtues. They seem, indeed, allied to purity of thought and delicacy of sentiment, giving a charm to the plainest attire, and rendering the richest more elegant.

5. Dress should be simple. The most expensive apparel should possess this grace; in this, as in every art, elegant simplicity is the highest beauty.

6. Dress should be modest.

7. Dress should be appropriate. There is a natural fondness in the young for gay colours. And why should they not admire what has been made so beautiful? Earth wears her robe of pleasant green; the sky melts into its lovely blue, or glows with crimson, purple, and gold; the

flowers blush with delicate hues, or are sprinkled with gorgeous dyes; the gems of ocean shine with dazzling lustre, and our Maker has deeply implanted a love of the beautiful in every human heart. The utilitarian may deny this, but, with all the splendours of creation around us, we have but to open our eyes, and his arguments are forgotten. Youth, buoyant with hope, and radiant with gladness, why should it be shrouded in sombre hues? Have we not here the teachings of nature? Should not life's spring-time and summer be clad like their prototypes, and old age wear the sober livery of winter! Goldsmith compares the style of dress appropriate to different periods of life to the three orders of Grecian architecture. The elaborate and beautiful Corinthian, for youth; the graceful, but less ornamented Ionic, for middle life; and the chaste, simple Doric, for venerable age.

Children love the gayest colours; but, as the mind expands and the taste refines, more delicate hues are preferred. Colours, in dress, that do not harmonize or contrast agreeably, pain the eye, as discords in music do the ear. Light blue and pink, purple and blue, green and blue, yellow and pink, worn as contrasts, are unpleasant to almost every eye; while purple and yellow or orange, blue and brown, salmon and blue, green and pink, lilac and green, are pleasing contrasts. This is not a factitious taste, but is, as the painter well knows, derived from observation of the harmonies of nature. Fashion may reconcile us for a time to almost any absurdity; but good taste, being founded in natural sensibility to beauty, will not yield entirely to her caprices.

It is much to be desired, that the young ladies of our country would always dress with plainness and simplicity in the street and at church. Ladies do not surely go to church to display their finery; they have other public places where their vanity may be gratified. Almost the only arena for display in many places unfortunately seems to be the holy sanctuary—the place for humiliation and self-abasement. Gay as a parterre of tulips and hyacinths at one season, and waving with plumes, like a regiment of soldiers,

at another. Is this a Christian assembly, met to worship God? Not that such an assembly should be clothed in sackcloth, or any other peculiar and homely garb; but surely a simple and unostentatious style of dress would be far more appropriate.

On a journey, a plain dress is most becoming. We form an opinion of strangers from their appearance; it is the only index. When a young lady carries her light silks, her embroidery and jewellery, upon her person, in stage-coach, railway, and steamboat, through the length and breadth of the land, we conclude that they are her only letter of recommendation, and there may be those to whom it is sufficient. Still more, not a few will be apt to think that such things must be novelties to herself, or she would make less display of them.

8. Dress should correspond in some degree with the wealth of the wearer. There should be moderation and sobriety, however, arising from principle. The extravagance of wives and daughters has doubtless increased men's desire to be rich, and led them in many instances to those rash endeavours and wild speculations that have seemed to threaten destruction to our country. Is the present comparative calm a proof that they have become more considerate, more economical? Are there none who still encroach upon a father's fond indulgence to gratify vanity? If you follow Shakspeare's rule, "Costly as your purse can buy," how will you be able to obey a charge coming from higher authority: "To do good, to be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate?"

9. Dress should not occupy too much time and thought, nor be made the subject of never-ending discussion. Well chosen, neatly made, and carefully put on, it has already been a cruel monopolizer of time; give it no farther attention than is necessary to preserve it from injury, and let not that care be apparent. A splendid dress may be worn so consciously as to lose all gracefulness and elegance.

CHAPTER XIX.

CONVERSATION.

"Talk to women, talk to women as much as you can. This is the best school. This is the way to gain fluency, because you need not care what you say, and had better not be sensible."—D'ISRAEL.

It is not very unfair to believe, that most young men have adopted this motto as their own; at least their conversation in ladies' society too often indicates that they think they "had better not be sensible." If young ladies are flippant and silly, may it not arise from a similar desire to please? It is morally certain, that the tone of conversation will not be much improved, until the taste of your superiors is more correct.

Every lady thinks it complimentary to have sensible rational conversation addressed to her; it proves that her mind is not considered vastly inferior. She need not say much; a good listener is invaluable, and Bacon says—"The honourablest part of talk is to give the occasion." Let us learn farther from his wisdom: "She that questioneth much shall learn much, and content much, but especially if she apply her questions to the skill of the persons whom she asketh; for she shall give them occasion to please themselves in speaking, and herself shall continually gather knowledge." Shakspeare makes Gratiano say, "Silence is only commendable in a neat's tongue dried!" But a severer satirist on the sex says:—

"A dearth of words a woman need not fear,
But 'tis a task indeed to learn to hear."

The solemn fop, the flippant coxcomb, the prosing pedant—all may like to please themselves by prating to you, each in his peculiar style; and to adapt your conversation with equal delicacy and tact to each, would require more than

the wisdom of a Bacon; and to listen to them, "not poppy nor mandragora" can be so consummately narcotic.

Flattery, censoriousness, slander, sarcasm, egotism, tittle-tattle, exaggeration,—dark catalogue! Yet of all these conversational vices, ladies, young and old, have been accused. Flattery sometimes arises from too strong a desire to please, without any baser motive. Compliments are not always wrong; they may come from an affectionate heart, that can with difficulty conceal its sentiments and emotions. When there is not the slightest deviation from truth, and when nothing is sought, or to be gained, they should be given very sparingly—not entirely proscribed.

Flattery implies an intention to deceive, to mislead with regard to appearance or merit, either to gain favour, or to make sport of another's vain credulity. It is a base, a mean and craven spirit, that offers this incense at any shrine. Every lady should have too much self-respect to offer or to receive such incense.

Censoriousness brings so much unpopularity to those who indulge in it, that few are willing to appear so unamiable. But there are some fine ladies who complain—

"Folks are so awkward, things so unpolite,
They're elegantly pained from morn till night"

Everything appears to them as distorted as their own faces in a convex mirror. They are careful to suggest to their friends every defect that they detect in disposition and character, and vastly ingenious and quick-sighted in the discovery. The bright side of character has no charms for them. Instead of depicting their acquaintances, as Queen Elizabeth would have her face painted, without shadow, their censoriousness casts every feature into the deepest shade.

It is said of the profound Locke, by his biographer, that "he was at first pretty much disposed to give advice, where he thought it was wanted; but experience of the little effect it had, made him grow more reserved."

But censure of those present is far less malicious than

slander of the absent. False, treacherous, hateful slander, whose wounds no balm can cure! In times gone by, the gentler sex were accused of a strong predilection for that "sweetener to a female feast;" but in days of better education, let us hope that they are not so culpable. God's holy law has protected "our neighbour" from this violation of his rights, and all mankind cry out against him who "filches a good name." Even in the most retired moment, with your tried and faithful friend, beware of whispering one word to injure the reputation of a fellow-being. Condemn vice, by word and deed, and have moral courage to avoid the society of the vicious, whatever be their rank and station. You are partakers in others' sins, if you do not thus openly show detestation of crime. But sully not the reputation of the virtuous by the venomous breath of slander; it will not pass away, like your breath upon the mirror, leaving it bright and pure; it will go out into a world of wickedness, and rest a dark cloud upon their once fair fame. The mischief and suffering which may be occasioned by a few idle words is incalculable; but the character of a busy-body, a tattler, or a retailer of scandal, which some women earn for themselves, is, without question, one of the most degrading that can be assigned to any one. The following example of the effects sometimes flowing from the evil speaking of such a busy-body may not, perhaps, be without its value:—

"Do not mention it again for your life."

"No, of course not. The least said about such things the better."

"Do not, for the world. I have told you in perfect confidence, and you are the only one to whom I have breathed it. I would not have it get out for any consideration."

"Give yourself no uneasiness. I shall not allude to the subject."

"I merely told you because I knew you were a friend, and would let it go no farther. But would you have thought it?"

"I certainly am very much surprised."

"So am I. But when things pass before your eyes and ears, there is no gainsaying them."

"No. Seeing is said to be believing."

"Of course it is."

"But, Mrs. Grimes, are you quite sure that you heard aright?"

"I am positive, Mrs. Raynor. It occurred only an hour ago, and the whole thing is distinctly remembered. I called in to see Mrs. Comegys; and while I was there, the bundle of goods came home. I was present when she opened it, and she showed me the lawn dress it contained. There were twelve yards in it. 'I must see if there is good measure,' she said, as she measured it off. There were fifteen yards instead of twelve. 'How is this?' she remarked; 'I am sure I paid for only twelve yards, and here are fifteen.' The measure was applied again. There was no mistake; the lawn measured fifteen yards. 'What are you going to do with the surplus?' I asked. 'Keep it, of course,' said Mrs. Comegys; 'there is just enough to make little Julia a frock. Won't she look sweet in it?' I was so confounded, that I could not say a word. Indeed, I could hardly look her in the face. At first I thought of calling her attention to the dishonesty of the act; but then I reflected that, as it was none of my business, I might get her ill-will for meddling in what did not concern me."

"And you really think, then, that she meant to keep the three yards without paying for them?"

"O, certainly! But then I would not say anything about it for the world. I would not name it, on any consideration. Of course you will not repeat it."

"No. If I cannot find any good to tell of my friends, I try to refrain from saying anything evil."

"A most excellent rule, Mrs. Raynor, and one that I always follow. I never speak evil of my friends, for it always does more harm than good. No one can say that I ever tried to injure another."

"I hope Mrs. Comegys thought better of the matter, upon reflection," said Mrs. Raynor.

"So do I. But I am afraid not. Two or three little things occur to me now, that I have seen in my intercourse with her, which go to satisfy my mind that her moral perceptions are not the best in the world. Mrs. Comegys is a pleasant friend, and much esteemed by every one. It could do no good to spread this matter abroad, but harm."

After repeating over and over again her injunction to Mrs. Raynor not to repeat a word of what she had told her, Mrs. Grimes bade this lady, upon whom she had called, good morning, and went on her way. Ten minutes after, she was in the parlour of an acquaintance, named Mrs. Florence, entertaining her with the gossip she had picked up since their last meeting. She had not been there long, before, lowering her voice, she said, in a confidential way—

"I was at Mrs. Comegys' to-day, and saw something that amazed me beyond everything."

"Indeed!"

"Yes. You will be astonished when you hear it. Suppose you had purchased a dress, and paid for a certain number of yards; and when the dress was sent home, you should find that the shopkeeper had made a mistake, and sent you three or four yards more than you had settled for, what would you do?"

"Send it back, of course."

"Of course, so say I. To act differently would not be honest. Do you think so?"

"It would not be honest for me."

"No, nor for any one. Now, would you have believed it? Mrs. Comegys not only thinks, but acts differently."

"You must be mistaken, certainly, Mrs. Grimes."

"Seeing is believing, Mrs. Florence."

"So it is said, but I could hardly believe my eyes against Mrs. Comegys' integrity of character. I think I ought to know her well, for we have been very intimate for years."

"And I thought I knew her too. But it seems that I was mistaken."

Mrs. Grimes then repeated the story of the lawn dress.

"Can it be possible?" exclaimed Mrs. Florence. "I can hardly credit it."

"It occurred just as I tell you. But, Mrs. Florence, you must not tell it again for the world. I have mentioned it to you in the strictest confidence. But I need hardly say this to you, for I know how discreet you are."

"I shall not mention it."

"It could do no good."

"None in the world."

"Is it not surprising, that a woman who is so well off in the world as Mrs. Comegys, should stoop to a petty act like this?"

"It is, certainly."

"But for your life, Mrs. Florence, do not repeat this!"

"I shall certainly not speak of it, Mrs. Grimes. It is too serious a matter. I wish I had not heard of it, for I can never feel toward Mrs. Comegys as I have done. She is a very pleasant woman, and one with whom I have heretofore always found it agreeable and profitable to spend an hour."

"It is a little matter, after all," remarked Mrs. Grimes, "and, perhaps, we treat it too seriously."

"We should never think lightly of dishonest practices, Mrs. Grimes. Whoever is dishonest in little things, will be dishonest in great things, if a good opportunity offer. Mrs. Comegys can never be to me what she has been. That is impossible."

"Of course you will not speak of it again."

"You need have no fear of that."

A few days after, Mrs. Raynor made a call upon a friend, who said to her—

"Have you heard about Mrs. Comegys?"

"What about her?"

"I supposed you knew it. I have heard it from half a dozen persons. It is said that Perkins, through a mistake of one of his clerks, sent her home some fifteen or twenty yards of lawn more than she had paid for, and that, instead of sending it back, she kept it, and made it up for her children."

"I do not think any honest woman would be guilty of

such an act. Yes, I heard of it a few days ago as a great secret, and have not mentioned it to any one before."

"Secret! it is no secret. It is in every one's mouth."

"Is it possible! I must say that Mrs. Grimes has been very indiscreet."

"Mrs. Grimes! Did it come from her in the first place?"

"Yes. She told me that she was present when the lawn came home, and saw Mrs. Comegys measure it, and heard her say that she meant to keep it."

"Which she has done. For I saw her in the street, yesterday, with a beautiful new lawn dress; and her little Julia was with her, wearing one precisely like it."

"How any lady can do so is more than I can understand."

"So it is, Mrs. Raynor. Just to think of dressing your child up in a frock as good as stolen! Is it not dreadful?"

"It is, indeed!"

"Mrs. Comegys is not an honest woman. That is clear. I am told that this is not the first act of the kind of which she has been guilty."

"I can hardly believe that."

"Nor can I. But it is no harder to believe this, than to believe that she would cheat Perkins out of fifteen or twenty yards of lawn. It is a pity; for Mrs. Comegys, in everything else, is certainly a very nice woman. In fact, I do not know any one I visit with so much pleasure."

Thus the circle of detraction widened, until there was scarcely a friend or acquaintance of Mrs. Comegys, near or remote, who had not heard of her having cheated a dealer out of several yards of lawn. Three, it had first been alleged; but the most common version of the story made it fifteen or twenty. Meantime, Mrs. Comegys remained in entire ignorance of what was alleged against her, although she noticed in two or three of her acquaintances a trifling coldness, that struck her as rather singular.

One day her husband, seeing that she looked grave, said—

"You seem quite dull to-day, dear. Do you not feel well?"

"Yes, I feel as well as usual, in body."

"But not in mind?"

"I do not feel quite comfortable in mind, certainly, though I do not know that I have any serious cause of uneasiness."

"But if even a slight cause exists, may I ask what it is?"

"It is nothing more nor less than that I was coolly *cut* by an old friend to-day, whom I met in a shop on Chestnut Street; and as she is a woman that I highly esteem, both for the excellence of her character and her agreeable qualities as a friend, I cannot but feel a little hurt about it. If she were one of that capricious class who get offended with you once a-month, for no just cause whatever, I should not care a fig. But Mrs. Markle is a woman of character, good sense, and good feeling, whose friendship I have always prized."

"Was it Mrs. Markle?" said the husband, with some surprise.

"Yes."

"What can possibly be the cause?"

"I cannot tell."

"Have you thought over everything?"

"Yes, I have turned the matter over in my mind, but can imagine no reason why she, of all others, could treat me coolly."

"Have you never spoken of her in a way to have your words misinterpreted by some evil-minded person—Mrs. Grimes, for instance—whose memory or moral sense, one or the other, is so very dull?"

"I have never spoken of her to any one, except in terms of praise. I could not do otherwise, for I have hitherto looked upon her as one of the most faultless women I know."

"She has at least shown that she possesses one fault."

"What is that?"

"If she has heard anything against you of a character so serious as to make her wish to give up your acquaintance, she should at least have afforded you the chance of defending yourself before condemning you."

"I think that myself."

"It may be that she did not see you," Mr. Comegys suggested.

"She looked me in the face, and nodded with cold formality."

"Perhaps her mind was abstracted."

"It might have been so. Mine would have been very abstracted indeed, to keep me from a more cordial recognition of a friend."

"How would it do to call and see her?"

"I have been thinking of that. But my feelings naturally oppose it. I am not conscious of having done anything to merit a withdrawal of the friendly sentiments she has held towards me; if she wishes to withdraw them, my pride says, let her do so."

"But pride, you know, is not always the best adviser."

"No. Perhaps the less regard we pay to its promptings the better."

"I think so."

"It is rather awkward to go to a person and ask why you have been treated coldly."

"I know it is. But in a choice of evils, is it not always wisest to choose the least?"

"But is any one's bad opinion of you, if it be not correctly formed, an evil?"

"Certainly it is."

"I do not know. I have a kind of independence about me which says, 'Let people think what they please, so long as you are conscious of no wrong.'"

"Indifference to the world's good or bad opinion is all very well," replied the husband, "if the world will misjudge us. Still, as anything that prejudices the minds of people against us tends to destroy our usefulness, it is our duty to take all proper care of our reputations, even to the sacrifice of a little feeling in doing so."

Thus argued with by her husband, Mrs. Comegys, after turning the matter over in her mind, finally concluded to go and see Mrs. Markle. It was a hard trial for her, but urged

on by a sense of right, she called upon her two or three days after having been treated so coldly. She sent up her name by the servant. In about five minutes, Mrs. Markle descended to the parlour, where her visiter was awaiting her, and met her in a reserved and formal manner, that was altogether unlike her former cordiality. It was as much as Mrs. Comegys could do to keep from retiring instantly, and without a word, from the house. But she compelled herself to go through with what she had begun. Mrs. Markle did, indeed, offer her hand, or rather the tips of her fingers; which Mrs. Comegys, in mere reciprocation of the formality, accepted. Then came an embarrassing pause, after which the latter said—

“I see that I was not mistaken in supposing that there was a marked coldness in your manner at our last meeting.”

Mrs. Markle inclined her head slightly.

“Of course there is a cause for this. May I, in justice to myself as well as others, inquire what it is?”

“I did not suppose you would press an inquiry on the subject,” replied Mrs. Markle. “But as you have done so, you are, of course, entitled to an answer.”

There came another pause, after which, with a disturbed voice, Mrs. Markle said—

“For some time I have heard a rumour in regard to you, that I could not credit. Of late it has been so often repeated, that I felt it to be my duty to ascertain its truth or falsehood. On tracing, with some labour, the report to its origin, I am grieved to find that it is too true.”

“Will you be so kind as state what it is,” said Mrs. Comegys, in a firm voice.

“It is said that you bought a dress at a warehouse in this city, and that on its being sent home, there proved to be some yards more in the piece of goods than you paid for; and that, instead of returning what was not your own, you kept it and had it made up for one of your children.”

The face of Mrs. Comegys instantly became like crimson; and she turned her head away to hide the confusion into

which this unexpected allegation had thrown her. As soon as she could command her voice, she said—

"You will, of course, give me the author of this charge."

"You are entitled to know, I suppose," replied Mrs. Markle. "The person who originated this report is Mrs. Grimes. She states that she was present when the dress was sent home; that you measured it in her presence, and that, finding there were several yards over, you declared your intention to keep it and make of it a frock for your little girl. And, moreover, that she saw Julia wearing a frock afterwards, exactly like the pattern of the one you had, which she well remembers. This seems conclusive evidence; at least it was so to my mind, and I acted accordingly."

Mrs. Comegys sat for the full space of a minute with her eyes upon the floor, without speaking. When she looked up, the flush that had covered her face had gone. It was very pale instead. Rising from her chair, she bowed formally, and without saying a word, withdrew.

"Ah me! Is it not sad!" murmured Mrs. Markle, as she heard the street door close upon her visitor. "So much that is agreeable and excellent, all dimmed by the want of principle. It seems hardly credible that a lady, with everything she needs, could act dishonestly for so small a matter. A few yards of lawn against integrity and character! What a price to set upon virtue!"

Not more than half an hour after the departure of Mrs. Comegys, Mrs. Grimes called in to see Mrs. Markle.

"I hope," she said, shortly after she was seated, "that you will not say a word about what I told you a few days ago; I should not have opened my lips on the subject if you had not asked me about it. I only mentioned it, in the first place, to a friend in whom I had the greatest confidence in the world. She has told some one, very improperly, for it was imparted to her as a secret, and in that way it has been spread abroad. I regret it exceedingly, for I would be the last person in the world to say a word to injure any one. I am particularly guarded in this."

"If it is the truth, Mrs. Grimes, I do not see that you

need be so anxious about keeping it a secret," returned Mrs. Markle.

"The truth! Do you think I would utter a word that was not true?"

"I did not mean to infer that you would. I believed that what you said in regard to Mrs. Comegys was the fact."

"It certainly was. But then, it will do no good to spread it. What has made me call in to see you is this; some one told me that, in consequence of this matter, you had dropped the acquaintance of Mrs. Comegys."

"It is true; I cannot associate on intimate terms with a woman who lacks honest principles."

"But do you not see that this will bring matters to a head, and that I shall be placed in a very awkward position?"

"You are ready to adhere to your statement in regard to Mrs. Comegys?"

"O, certainly; I have told nothing but what I saw. But still, you can see that it will make me feel exceedingly unpleasant."

"Things of this kind are never very agreeable, I know, Mrs. Grimes. Still we must act as we think right, let what will follow. Mrs. Comegys has already called upon me to ask an explanation of my conduct towards her."

"She has!" Mrs. Grimes seemed sadly distressed. "What did you say to her?"

"I told her just what I had heard."

"Did she ask your author?" Mrs. Grimes was almost pale with suspense.

"She did."

"Of course you did not mention my name?"

"She asked the author of the charge, and I named you."

"O dear, Mrs. Markle! I wish you had not done that. I shall be involved in a word of trouble, and get the reputation of a tattler and mischief-maker. What did she say?"

"Not one word."

"She did not deny it?"

"No."

"Of course she could not. Well, that is some satisfaction at least. She might have denied it, and tried to make me out a liar, and there would have been plenty to believe her word against mine. I am glad she did not deny it. She did not say a word!"

"No."

"Did she look guilty?"

"You would have thought so, if you had seen her."

"What did she do?"

"She sat with her eyes upon the floor for some time, and then rose up, and without uttering a word, left the house."

"I wish she had said something. It would have been a satisfaction to know what she thought. But I suppose the poor woman was so confounded, that she did not know what to say."

"So it appeared to me. She was completely stunned. I really pitied her from my heart. But want of principle should never be countenanced. If we are to have social integrity, we must mark with appropriate condemnation all deviations therefrom. It was exceedingly painful, but the path of duty was before me, and I walked in it without faltering."

Mrs. Grimes was neither so clear-sighted, nor so well satisfied with what she had done, as all this. She left the house of Mrs. Markle feeling very unhappy. Although she had been using her little unruly member against Mrs. Comegys with due industry, she was all the while on the most friendly terms with her, visiting at her house and being visited. It was only a few days before, that she had spent an evening with her. Not that Mrs. Grimes was deliberately hypocritical, but she had an unbridled tongue, and, like too many in society, more cautious about what they said than she, was much better pleased to see evil than good in a neighbour. There are very few of us, perhaps, who have not something of this fault—an exceedingly bad fault, by the way. It seems to arise from a consciousness of our own imperfections, and the pleasure we feel in making the discovery that others are as bad, if not worse, than we are.

Two days after Mrs. Comegys had called on Mrs. Markle to ask for explanations, the latter received a note in the following words:—

“MADAM,—I have no doubt you have acted according to your own views of right, in dropping as suddenly as you have done the acquaintance of an old friend. Perhaps, if you had called upon me and asked an explanation, you might have acted a little differently. My present object in addressing you is to ask, as a matter of justice, that you will call at my house to-morrow at twelve o'clock. I think that I am entitled to speak a word in my own defence. After you have heard that, I shall not complain of any course you may think it right to pursue. ANNA COMEGYS.”

Mrs. Markle could do no less than call as she had been desired to do. At twelve o'clock she rang the bell at Mrs. Comegys' door, and was shown into the parlour, where, to her no small surprise, she found about twenty ladies, most of them acquaintances, assembled, Mrs. Grimes among the number. In about ten minutes Mrs. Comegys came into the room, her countenance wearing a calm but grave aspect. She bowed slightly, but was not cordial toward any one, present. Without a pause she said—

“Ladies, I have learned within a few days, very greatly to my surprise and grief, that there is a report circulated among my friends, injurious to my character. I have taken some pains to ascertain those to whom the report is familiar, and have invited all such to be here to-day. I learn from several sources, that the report originated with Mrs. Grimes, and that she has been very industrious in circulating it to my injury.”

“Perhaps you wrong Mrs. Grimes there,” said Mrs. Markle. “She did not mention it to me until I inquired of her if the report was true. And then she told me that she had never told it but to a single person, in confidence, and that she had inadvertently alluded to it; and thus it became a common report. As I mentioned her name to

you as my authority, I think it just to state this much, as Mrs. Grimes cannot justly be charged with having sought to circulate the matter to your injury."

"We will see how far that statement is correct," said Mrs. Comegys, calmly. "Did she mention the subject to you, Mrs. Raynor, may I ask?"

"She did," replied Mrs. Raynor; "but in strict confidence, and enjoining it upon me not to mention it to any one, as she had no wish to injure you."

"Did you tell it to any one?"

"No. It was but a little while afterward that it was told to me by some one else."

"Was it mentioned to you, Mrs. Florence?" proceeded Mrs. Comegys, turning to another of the ladies present.

"It was."

"By Mrs. Grimes?"

"Yes."

"In confidence, I suppose?"

"I was requested to say nothing about it, for fear that it might create an unfavourable impression in regard to you."

"Very well; there are two already. How was it in your case, Mrs. Wheeler?"

This lady answered as the others had done. The question was then put to each lady in the room, when it appeared that, out of the twenty, fifteen had received their information on the subject from Mrs. Grimes; and that upon every one secrecy had been enjoined, although not in every case maintained.

"So it seems, Mrs. Markle," said Mrs. Comegys, after she had finished her inquiries, "that Mrs. Grimes has, as I alleged, industriously circulated this matter to my injury."

"It certainly appears so," returned Mrs. Markle, coldly.

Thus brought into a corner, Mrs. Grimes assumed a bold front.

"Telling it to a thousand is not half so bad as doing it, Mrs. Comegys," she said, angrily. "You need not try to screen yourself from the consequences of your wrong doings, by raising a prejudice against me. Come to the

fact, madam! Come to the fact, and stand to what you have done."

"I have no hesitation about doing that, Mrs. Grimes. Pray, what have I done?"

"It is very strange that you should ask, madam."

"But I am charged, I learn, with having committed a crime against society; and you are the author of the charge. What is the crime?"

"If it is any satisfaction to you, I will tell you. I was at your house when the pattern of the lawn dress you now have on was sent home. You measured it in my presence, and there were several yards in it more than you had bought and paid for."

"How many?"

Mrs. Grimes looked confused, and stammered out, "I do not exactly remember."

"How many did she tell you, Mrs. Raynor?"

"She said there were three yards."

"And you, Mrs. Fisher?"

"Six yards."

"And you, Mrs. Florence?"

"Fifteen yards, I think."

"O no, Mrs. Florence; you are entirely mistaken. You misunderstood me," said Mrs. Grimes, in extreme perturbation.

"Perhaps so. But that is my present impression," replied Mrs. Florence.

"That will do," said Mrs. Comegys. "Mrs. Grimes can now go on with her answer to my inquiry. I will remark, however, that the overplus was just two yards."

"Then you admit that the lawn exceeded what you had paid for?"

"Certainly I do. It overran just two yards."

"Very well. One yard or a dozen, the principle is just the same. I asked you what you meant to do with it, and you replied, 'Keep it, of course.' Do you deny that?"

"No. It is very likely that I did say so, for it was my intention to keep it."

"Without paying for it?" asked Mrs. Markle.

Mrs. Comegys looked steadily into the face of her interrogator for some moments, a flush upon her cheek, an indignant light in her eye. Then, without replying to the question, she rose and rang the parlour bell. In a few moments a servant came in.

"Ask the young man in the dining-room if he will be kind enough to step here." In a little while a step was heard along the passage, and then a young man entered.

"You are a clerk in Mr. Perkins' store?" said Mrs. Comegys.

"Yes, ma'am."

"You remember my buying this lawn dress at your store?"

"Very well, ma'am. I should forget a good many recent incidents before I forgot that."

"What impressed it upon your memory?"

"This circumstance. I was very much hurried at the time when you bought it, and in measuring it off, made a mistake of two yards. There should have been four dresses in the piece. One had been sold previous to yours. Not long after your dress had been sent home, two ladies came into the store and chose each a dress from the pattern. On measuring the piece, I discovered that it was two yards short, and lost the sale of the dresses in consequence, as the ladies wished them alike. An hour afterward, you called to say that I had made a mistake and sent you home two yards more than you had paid for; but that, as you liked the pattern very much, you would keep it and buy two yards more for a dress for your little girl."

"Yes; that is exactly the truth in regard to the dress. I am obliged to you, Mr. S—, for the trouble I have given you. I will not detain you any longer."

The young man bowed and withdrew.

The ladies immediately gathered round Mrs. Comegys, with a thousand apologies for having for a moment entertained the idea that she had been guilty of wrong; while Mrs. Grimes took refuge in a flood of tears.

"I have but one cause of complaint against you all,"

said the injured lady, "and it is this. A charge of so serious a nature should never have been made a subject of common report without my being offered a chance to defend myself. As for Mrs. Grimes, I cannot readily understand how she fell into the error she did. But she never would have fallen into it if she had not been more willing to think evil than good of others. I do not say this to hurt her, but to state a truth that it may be well for her, and perhaps some of the rest of us, to lay to heart. It is a serious thing to speak evil of another, and should never be done except on the most unequivocal evidence; but it was base, indeed, for one pretending to the name of a friend to circulate such a report, when, if it was true, she had the opportunity of administering both advice and reproof while the deed her own mind has conjured up was still unexecuted."

The reader may be left to conjecture the state of mind of the ladies present, who had thus lent an ear to the base scandal of a mischievous tattler, and so put themselves in this painful position in relation to a lady of high moral principle and the strictest purity of life. Their reflections then were probably punishment enough for even the base folly of such a false friend as Mrs. Grimes.

Vanity leads to unprofitable conversation. Hour after hour is oftentimes wasted upon the discussion of the colour of a ribbon, or the shape of a shoe. The dress of the fashionable and the unfashionable is a most fertile topic of conversation, giving zest to the vapid hours of the unintellectual. Who doubts that due attention to dress must be rendered? But the interminable discussions to which it leads, to the exclusion of better subjects, lowers the intellect, and tells too plainly the ignoble ambition of female vanity—to spread every sail to catch the breeze of admiration.

Sarcasm is a dangerous weapon, often recoiling upon the wielder with keen and biting stroke. A dull weapon will wound, if directed to a vulnerable spot, and those who have little sense and no wit can be spitefully severe. Of such, Hannah More says: "They exhibit no small satisfaction in

ridiculing women of high intellectual endowments, while they exclaim with affected humility, and much real envy, that 'they are thankful they are not geniuses.' Now, though one is glad to hear gratitude expressed on any occasion, yet the want of sense is really no such great mercy to be thankful for; and it would indicate a better spirit, were they to pray to be enabled to make a right use of the moderate understanding they possess, instead of exposing, with a visible pleasure, the imaginary or real defects of their more shining acquaintance."

It is dangerous to be severe upon the faults of our friends, even in jest. Like blows given by boxers, at first in sport, they often end in angry earnest. Lively repartee may sometimes be agreeable; when it delicately avoids personality, it may give brilliancy to conversation; but this can seldom be avoided. Defend us from the quips and quirks of an habitual punster, who snaps up your honest words, and turns them into traitors before your eyes.

To women, *wit* is a peculiarly perilous possession, which nothing short of the sober-mindedness of Christianity can keep in order. Intemperate wit craves admiration as its natural aliment; it lives on flattery as its daily bread. The professed wit is a hungry beggar, that subsists on the extorted alms of perpetual panegyric. The rational, sensible conversation of those who prefer being agreeable to being witty, is repugnant to such; if others writhe under their inflections, they yawn under this.

Woe to the woman who gains the reputation of wit. She is expected never to open her mouth to speak, without dropping pearls and diamonds; if her wit be not chastised into meek subordination, she is feared by one sex and hated by the other. Even although it be thus chastened, there are many who look upon it in its harmless playfulness as they would upon the gambols of an uncaged tigress.

But of all faults in conversation, *egotism* is the most common, only because pardoned by all those who indulge in it themselves. A tête-à-tête between two egotists is a laughable strife for the balance of power. The eagerness of

each to maintain the ground—the volubility of the one who gains it for a time—the anxiety of the other to seize the first faltering pause—till impatience overcomes at length all politeness, and both talk until one has fairly talked the other down. In society, the thoughts of these egotists cannot by any means be diverted from themselves. It appears as though there were not a spot in the universe, that fond self-love did not associate in some degree with their interests.

“When I was with Parry,” says the traveller, “we encountered some of those tremendous icebergs——” “That reminds me,” interrupts the egotist, “of what I suffered during a ride last winter, when the snow-drifts were as high as the horses’ heads”—and so on, and on, with a tedious tale of *egotism*, while all wait with impatience for the solicited narrative of adventure. The traveller again commences, but goes not far before another chord is struck in the egotist’s mind, which inharmoniously interrupts the speaker, who now despairs of finishing his story. Neither iceberg nor volcano, geyser nor maelstrom, tornado nor avalanche, can arrest the egotist’s thoughts, and turn them from beloved self. Were every member of the social circle equally governed by this monopolizing egotism, they would resemble a flock of chickens fighting for a delicate morsel thrown among them : one snatches it up and runs, another seizes it and begins to enjoy it, when a third makes off with it, but chances to drop the prize ; half a dozen new claimants fly at it, until it is finally trampled under foot and lost. It would be an effectual cure, were the egotist to bite her tongue every third time that I or me came to the tip of it. “The unruly member” would run the risk of being totally disabled.

“Conversation is the music of the mind, an intellectual orchestra, where all the instruments should bear a part, but where none should play together.”

“She openeth her mouth with wisdom, and in her tongue is the law of kindness.” This is what gives to conversation its crowning excellence—the law of kindness—the philosopher’s stone that transmutes all to gold. Thoughts,

breathed forth from a warm, true heart, a heart forgetting selfish interests in a generous sympathy with others, find a ready ear.

A pleasant colloquial style appears to be scarcely attainable by those who are not so happy as to enjoy it from nature. Many examples might be given of men of genius, who have been sadly destitute of conversational talents; yet all have by no means been thus deficient. Coleridge was distinguished above all his contemporaries for the wonderful fluency and richness of his conversation; yet one of them remarked, that "he discoursed, he never talked." Sir Walter Scott talked with people; we might know that from his works. With his warm-hearted kindness, infused into his racy style—his exhaustless fund of anecdote, and immense field of illustration—how could he be otherwise than a delightful companion? Hannah More, as you well know, was remarkable for her colloquial talents; in early life, how difficult would it have been for her to deny herself the intense delight which she enjoyed in that circle of learning, wit, eloquence, and rank, where she shone with such unrivalled brilliancy: not altogether unrivalled either, for there were the warm-hearted Mrs. Boscawen, the elegant Mrs. Montague, and the learned Mrs. Elizabeth Carter.

Madame de Staël was so fond of conversation, that it was misery for her to live out of Paris; for there only, in her estimation, could anything deserving the name of conversation be enjoyed. Happily, such a taste for company, and such an excessive fondness for intellectual excitement and display, find little room for development amid the social and domestic habits of England. Conversation is with us natural and spontaneous. English women know little of conversation as a *fine art*, and therefore seldom talk for display. Although the just demands of society often call them from their own firesides, may their sweetest, dearest enjoyments be there—may they ever find home a sphere wide enough for sprightly, rational, intellectual conversation, that, whenever they mingle with larger circles, it may be easy, useful, cheerful, and agreeable!

CHAPTER XX.

EMPLOYMENT OF TIME.

"Spirit, proud spirit, ponder thy state
If thine the leaf's lightness, not thine the leaf's fate;
It may flutter, and glisten, and wither, and die,
And heed not our pity, and ask not our sigh;
But for thee, the immortal, no winter may throw
Eternal repose on thy joy or thy woe;
Thou must live, and live ever, in glory or gloom,
Beyond the world's precincts, beyond the dark tomb."

MISS JEWSBURY.

WHEN reviewing the formal and wearisome routine of fashionable visiting and gay excesses and dissipation, which bring only ennui and disappointment to all engaged in them, we are tempted to ask : Can it be, that an immortal creature thus spends years of a brief probation ! How precious is the treasure whose golden sands are thus treacherously wasting away ! The question comes home to every conscience, How shall I perform the duties that I owe to my Creator, my fellow-beings, and myself ? "As he that lives longest," says a great moralist, "lives but a little while, every man may be certain that he has no time to waste. The duties of life are commensurate to its duration, and every day brings its task, which, if neglected, is doubled on the morrow. But he that has already trifled away those months and years in which he should have laboured, must remember that he has now only a part of that of which the whole is little ; and that since the few moments remaining are to be considered as the last trust of Heaven, not one is to be lost."

It would be well for every one, after a careful consideration of her own condition and responsibilities, to make out a set of rules for the arrangement of time. The peculiar circumstances of each individual would have their influence in modifying these rules ; but every one should be systematic.

Something like the following might be appropriate to your condition, namely :—

1. My waking thoughts shall be upon my Heavenly Father, who has spread over me the wings of love, and opened my eyes upon another day ; sensible of his mercy, and anxious for a continuation of his blessings.

2. I will spend half an hour (or more), before breakfast, in reading his Holy Word, and in prayer.

3. After breakfast I will endeavour to assist my mother. Should she need my aid in the nursery, or in household affairs, or elsewhere, it shall be cheerfully yielded.

4. If the occupations of the morning do not afford sufficient exercise, I will walk with my younger sister, and call upon some poor pensioner upon my mother's or my own bounty. I can set her room in order, perhaps, and my little sister can carry some flowers to give it a more cheerful look. I can read the poor old woman a chapter in her Bible, and then return home. I must devote some time every day (or every week) to this or some other benevolent purpose.

5. My next hour must be for study. As one hour is all that I can now devote to it, my application must be such as to make it profitable.

6. My wardrobe must be kept in order. A portion of time sufficient for this purpose must be daily devoted to it, or to some other useful needle-work.

7. I must be on my guard against time-stealers, who would entertain me for hours with scandal and unprofitable gossip ; and endeavour, when making those visits which friendship and the etiquette of society demand, to avoid these faults myself.

8. An hour or two must be set apart for miscellaneous reading, writing letters, or an analysis of what I have previously read.

9. I will endeavour to spend my time at table profitably, promoting, as far as lies in my power, cheerful social intercourse.

10. If my father require any assistance that I can render,

my time must be appropriated to it. If I can entertain him with music, or reading aloud in the evening, I will endeavour always to be in readiness.

11. At the close of every day, I will spend some time in self-examination :

" Talk with my^{past} hours,
And ask them what report they bore to heaven."

12. I will again read a portion of God's holy book, and of some book of practical or devotional religion.

13. Again will I commend myself to the care of Almighty God ; confess my sins ; implore his pardon for the sake of Jesus Christ ; ask for his grace and intercession, and for the aid and guidance of his Holy Spirit.

Such plain, specific rules, conscientiously written and conscientiously acted upon, may keep you from that temptation which you pray not to be led into ; but to which idleness, and the want of arrangement in the employment of time, would expose you every hour.

God may have showered upon you noble gifts ; life is passing away, and are these gifts still used only for self-gratification, ministering to your own pride ? The moral influence that you exert at this period of life, when the spell of youth and beauty is around you, is incalculable. It is fearful to consider with what thoughtless unconcern you may be exerting this influence. Hitherto, your time has been mostly under the control of others ; now, you have more freedom, more leisure, and the one, five, or ten talents which the all-wise Dispenser has bestowed, must be doubled by your earnest zeal and untiring perseverance. The work of self-education must go on ; but self must not monopolize your time and heart. " The varied air and scenery of nature are not more intended and adapted to renew bodily health, than are the varied spheres of benevolence to promote mental health. Have something good to live for, beyond yourself, if you would live happy."

CHAPTER XXI.

FRIENDSHIP.

"Friendship is no plant of hasty growth :
Though rooted in esteem's deep soil, the slow
And gradual culture of kind intercourse
Must bring it to perfection."

JOANNA BAILLIE.

THE human heart needs the solace of sympathy ; the mind, too, seeks companionship. During life's early morning, friendships are the result of accident rather than of choice ; yet even then, there is some real or fancied congeniality of feeling. As the judgment matures, you will be able to analyze character, and to choose friends with more discrimination. Yet how seldom, even at the noon of life, is the judgment exercised in the choice ; some fortuitous circumstances bring us into propinquity with one of whose mind and heart we know little ; an intimacy is formed which bears the name of friendship, though wanting in some of its essential ingredients. This companionship is what usually passes current in the world for the pure beaten gold of friendship. You may, in the course of life, complain of the selfishness, the inconstancy, the desertion, of *friends*, when they were never such ; they were only united to you by those cobweb-chains with which interest binds society together. A heart filled with integrity is never distrustful ; and they who are most in danger of being deceived, are themselves strangers to suspicion and deception. Yet the friendship of such is often sought by the self-interested. The cunning, who have not sincere and upright hearts, know the value of them.

But we are romantic enough to believe, that there is such a treasure as true friendship, even in this imperfect state ; the true metal, though not without the dross that alloys everything of human origin. If you feel a modest consciousness, my kind reader, of deserving a sincere friend, you will

doubtless gain one. Well says the wise man, "He that would have friends must show himself friendly."

Our blessed Saviour, when on earth, enjoyed, we may reverently believe, the pleasures of friendship. With Martha and Mary, and their brother, he seemed, emphatically, at home. In his human nature a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, he needed the sympathy and kindness of intimate friendship, and found them in the disciple who leaned upon his bosom, the loving and beloved John. What touching proof the dying Jesus gave of trustful faith in this friend! "When Jesus saw his mother, and the disciple standing by whom he loved, he saith unto his mother, Woman, behold thy son! Then saith he to the disciple, Behold thy mother! And from that hour, that disciple took her unto his own home."

True friendship cannot exist without entire confidence, a self-sacrificing spirit, and mutual forbearance.

There must be confidence in the character of a friend.

Unless you believed your friend to possess generosity, sensibility, and affection for you, there would be little love on your part; and unless he gave evidence of sincerity, prudence, and integrity, there would be no respect. This belief leads to trustfulness and unreserve in communicating your sentiments, hopes, sorrows, fears, plans of usefulness—in short, everything that interests you—that you may elicit sympathy or advice. How important is it, then, that your friend should not only possess an amiable character, but, in addition, those fixed principles which alone give stability and permanence to the qualities that you love and respect!

A *self-sacrificing spirit* is indispensable. Wait not to be told how you can oblige your friend, but find ways of doing it yourself; invent them. If she is more admired and caressed than yourself, rejoice that you possess the love of one so amiable. If, on the other hand, you have the superiority, make it up by the more assiduity and tenderness on your part. At the same time, be careful that her delicacy is not wounded by these efforts; you do not wish to burden

her with gratitude, lest the equality of friendship should be destroyed.

But this spirit has its severest trial, when sincerity and honesty compel you to reprove and admonish. There are times when you will be obliged to run the risk of losing a friend by your faithfulness. Shrink not from the responsibility. If you consider it one of the advantages of friendship, that it is the means of refining and exalting human character, you will receive advice and reproof thankfully, and offer it kindly and sincerely.

Imperfect and sinful beings as we know ourselves to be, we need much forbearance, even from those who love us best. Because you find a friend has some faults, that is no reason why you should discard her. God forbid that you should ever have the bitterness and anguish resulting from the discovery that you have loved and trusted one who was utterly unworthy! There should be a constant endeavour to elevate and purify the heart and mind of your friend, and a still more vigorous effort to improve your own. Sad and disheartening would it be, if we could never have friends until we felt perfectly worthy of their love. Then, in mournful desolateness, might we exclaim—

“Each in his hidden sphere of joy or woe,
Our hermit spirits dwell, or range apart.”

We have much on our side to be borne with and to be forgiven. How much it becomes us then to look with a charitable, tender, and forgiving spirit upon the faults of our friends!

The youthful aspirant for friendship must put far away the romantic expectations which spring from a too vivid imagination. Her Utopian dreams may prevent the enjoyment of that calm, rational, but still imperfect friendship, which alone exists in this fallen world.

“But for those bonds, all-perfect made,
Wherein bright spirits blend,
Like sister flowers of one sweet shade,
With the same breeze that bend,—
For that full bliss of thought allied,
Never to mortals given,
O, lay thy lovely dreams aside,
Or lift them unto heaven!”

CHAPTER XXII.

ACTING FROM GENERAL PRINCIPLES.

"I do not put abstract ideas wholly out of any question, because I well know that, under that name, I should dismiss principles; and that without the guide of sound, well-understood principles, all reasonings would be only a confused jumble of particular facts and details, without the means of drawing out any sort of theoretical or practical conclusion."—BURKE.

A *principle* is a truth admitted as fully proved, involving many subordinate truths. A *rule* may be merely arbitrary or conventional, formed to suit some particular condition of society, established without other authority than that of the members of that community, and only obligatory upon them. The manners and customs of different nations are such rules. A *precept* is a command respecting moral conduct, having the sanction of revealed truth. Neither rules nor precepts can be found suited to all occasions and to every individual being; but there are principles which are universally applicable. The Bible contains a few such general principles, founded in immutable truth, and of infinite obligation. Unfortunately, they are not the governing principles of many of the human race; instead of them, rules and maxims are substituted, without questioning their origin or their tendency. Among these maxims sanctioned by long usage, is the very popular one, "Do at Rome as the Romans do." It has ruined millions. It makes no exceptions, but, sweeping away the whole moral code, leaves you to be governed entirely by public opinion, which changes like the clouds of a sunset sky, into thousands of fantastic shapes, taking their momentary hues from apparently accidental causes. You reply, perhaps, "We must do as other people do; the many probably are right, and we should be ridiculed or blamed by them if we were singular." So far as regards fashions, customs, and modes, that do not involve moral considerations, it is well to show an accommodating spirit; it is no

proof of greatness or goodness to affect singularity, or to despise suitable attention to these things. But then nice discrimination must be used, to ascertain whether they encroach upon what is true, lawful, and right.

What will people say! Alas! how many have been driven from the path of duty by this intangible phantom! this terrifying consideration! What will people say!

'They praise and they admire, they know not what,
And know not whom, but as one leads the other;
And what delight, to be by such extolled.
To live upon their tongues, and be their talk,
Of whom to be dispraised were no small praise,
His lot who dares be singularly good?'

Until this dreaded people's opinion is based upon Christian principles, it cannot be a safe guide.

Neither is it safe to take for a model a fallible mortal, ever liable to err. Your admiring partiality may lead you even to imitate the faults and imbibe the prejudices of your model. How will you act for yourself, under new circumstances, when you have not your guide at hand! Encompassed with doubt and perplexity, you hesitate until the time for action is lost, or necessity brings you to a hasty, irrational decision.

Will it be for my worldly interest! Such a motive looks glaringly odious when thus distinctly expressed; yet how large a portion of mankind are governed by no other! Who, that has not had her finer sensibilities blunted by long intercourse with the world, does not turn from it with aversion! Besides, it is often difficult to decide what is for one's worldly interest; the world is an exceedingly capricious idol, and, when you have served her too openly, may turn upon you with contempt.

It becomes, then, of the utmost consequence, to fix some general principles of conduct in the mind, that you may not be driven about, like thistle-down, by every idle breath.

The Bible contains two grand, ultimate principles; namely: holiness produces happiness; sin, misery. All the commands of God are founded upon this immutable truth;

the precepts of the gospel flow from the same source. "Thou shalt love the Lord with all thy heart, and thy neighbour as thyself." "Do unto others as you would that others should do unto you."

But my young friends may say it is difficult to act from general principles; it requires reflection and reasoning. And for what else were reason and conscience given, but to control accountable beings? When these ultimate principles, and those directly deduced, are understood, and the decision is made to act from them, the whole conduct will in time be habitually referred to them; and instead of being hampered and burdened with thousands of rules and maxims, that may or may not be applicable, the freed spirit rejoices in the glorious liberty of truth.

You are surrounded by a circle of your acquaintances, who are dissecting the character of an absent member of that circle. They magnify her faults, they ridicule her foibles, they misinterpret her motives. What are your principles? Is it immoveably fixed in your mind, that slander is a violation of the ninth command of the decalogue? Then your countenance will express disapprobation, and, if possible, you will gently, but courageously, defend the absent.

Is it customary, in the place where you reside, to send the message "not at home," when it is not convenient to receive visitors? In defence of it, it is said, that it is perfectly understood; it is the fashion; everybody thinks it right. But is it truth, simple truth, more precious than gold? Truth is essential to holiness; falsehood is sin. You not only depart from strict verity yourself, but also oblige another to utter a falsehood. You teach deception, perhaps, to an ignorant being, who may thereby be led into an endless train of dishonesty and crime. You shudder at the idea of uttering an absolute falsehood, when it is thus presented to you; but have you not often been guilty of it, in this manner, without compunction?

You are in company with young men who are called "gay, fashionable, spirited, good-hearted fellows." They

jest about sacred things. Do you smile with them, or does your countenance, "more in sorrow than in anger," administer deserved reproof? Do you countenance them by your conduct, or even by your presence, in any excesses at table? And then, can you make sport of it, if they are a "little merry?" Perhaps your smile has encouraged the first step on the fearful road to irretrievable ruin; your example severed the last restraint; your levity sealed the doom of an only son, the joy and hope of his aged parents. If things were called by their right names, what you frequently hear mentioned as gaiety and fashionable folly would excite disgust and abhorrence. Happily, however, all the customs of modern society are tending more and more to eradicate the pernicious vice, which has so often had its beginnings in so apparently slight and innocent a source as the encouragement of a mirthful social circle, where the genial presence of woman has seemed to lend an additional sanction to these first steps in a course beset by so many dangers.

Fixed principles will produce true independence of mind, an excellence rarely found even among men; by some, it is thought incompatible with the natural delicacy of female character; but since God has created you rational and accountable, and given you principles for your guidance, you cannot say to any human being—

"God is thy law, thou mine; to know no more
Is woman's happiest knowledge and her praise."

You cannot fulfil the duties that devolve upon you in relation to others, without some independence. You cannot live without exerting influence; perhaps many look to you for example; if your course is as uncertain as that of the fluttering insect, governed by the impulse of the moment, you can hardly fail to mislead. Generous, noble impulses, are often lauded; but so long as the human heart is sinful, you may not trust implicitly to its impulses: they may be right, but it is mournfully certain that they may be, and are wrong.

Independence of mind gains confidence. They who seek popularity by listening with a pleased and acquiescent ear to everybody's opinion, without advancing any themselves, may gain it for a time; but it cannot be lasting. The self-love of the multitude will be thus gratified, until they reflect; then they despise the passive beings who have flattered and cajoled them. The wavering, yielding mind has no confidence in itself, and surely can inspire none.

True independence, or moral courage, based upon Christian principles, secures peace of mind and a quiet conscience. That being must resemble "the troubled sea when it cannot rest," who has a knowledge of right principles, without moral courage to act from them; wave after wave sweeps them away, leaving the vacillating theorist a prey to tormenting and unavailing regrets. Broken resolutions are thorns not easily extracted from the conscientious mind. There is no rational cheerfulness but that which flows from a good conscience.

This independence, or moral courage, should never be obtrusive, never savour of self-sufficiency. "It vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly." Having for its foundation those principles which are "pure, lovely, and of good report," it should carry itself modestly and gently. Although every one of my readers ought to possess moral courage strong enough to bear her right onward in the path of duty, judgment, sober judgment, must teach her when she is called upon to act. It is not your province, fair reader, to be censor-general, nor, "with the cant of philanthropy, to go Quixoting for adventures on the fields of humanity." What can be more dangerous for a young lady, than what in common parlance is styled disregarding public opinion? It would not be a very convincing proof, either of the delicacy of her sentiments or the correctness and strength of her principles. A truly delicate-minded young lady shrinks from the idea of being subjected to public opinion. She ought to love and cherish the good opinion of her friends as inestimably precious; but in general she should desire that the world at large say as

little as possible about her. She asks not the world's praise, and hopes to escape its censure, in the quiet, noiseless, unobtrusive path that she pursues. It is pitiable if any, misled by excessive love of admiration, are seen in the streets, and in public assemblies, till they become the subject of remark of every idler and gossip in the community.

It is not that daring masculine independence which braves the world that becomes a woman. Neither will her own fixed principles make her less reverential, less docile. Happily, the sphere in which her Creator places her, though it calls for the habitual exercise of moral courage, does not often demand unshrinking boldness. She is, from physical constitution, timid, retiring, and dependent; the affections are the noblest part of her nature, and they are exalted and strengthened by those principles by which she should for ever be governed. She will not, indeed, make her timidity an excuse for shrinking from any manifest duty, nor fail to cultivate that moral courage which will enable her to brave all public censure or prejudice in doing what her own conscience tells her to be right. Yet even in such a display of true and noble feminine courage, modesty will not fail to exercise its influence, and to add a grace to the heroism thus active in the path of duty.

CHAPTER XXIII.

PREJUDICE.

"Prejudice. Wise men imbibe, and fools never get rid of it. It is a little vile weed, which grows in every man's garden."—ANON.

ALL that we call opinions, which are not the result of reasoning and reflections, are prejudices.

There are prejudices of childhood; prejudices imbibed from parents and teachers; prejudices derived from books; and selfish prejudices.

We revel amidst the sweet reminiscences of childhood; but the glory that like a halo surrounds it, gives it the dim uncertainty most favourable to prejudice. They who were kind and indulgent to us were good and lovely; we knew no other criterion of excellence; the bad excited wonder and abhorrence only as they figured in the tales of the nursery. If, unfortunately, the Supreme Being was represented as awful in power and fearful in severity, without his most distinguishing attribute of love, the infant mind shuddered at the idea of his presence. The darkness was horrible, for he whom the Christian reverences as the God of love, and great Father of all, under whose protecting care he may lie down in peace, fearless amid every danger, is known to such only as an object of fear, and peace of mind is sought in the vain effort to drive God entirely from the thoughts. Here is not infrequently the source of the first prejudices against religion; deeply-rooted prejudices, haunting us in long after years. Had God been uniformly represented as a kind and benevolent being, supplying all the wants of childhood, making the glorious sun to shine, and the beautiful flowers to bud and blossom; the same God who revealed himself to men in the Son, redeeming the lost world, and restoring ruined man to the divine favour, by the greatest of all conceivable sacrifices—the guiltless, the divine, dying for guilty, rebel man—the Son of Man, who said: “Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not;” if such were the lessons instilled into the listening ear of childhood, far different would be the first impressions of the divine character. While moral distinctions are faint as the first dawn of morning, the young mind cannot be too strongly impressed with just ideas of the character of God as revealed to us in his Son. We can hardly estimate the extent of the good or evil which may spring from such a source, and leave a lasting impression behind. Carefully examine what prejudices on this sacred subject, thus derived, still remain. There are, perhaps, many such which even now interpose a dark cloud between you and your Heavenly Father.

Yet there are some prejudices of childhood which we would not remove—those prejudices of the heart which spring from no unhallowed source. If the early loved and lost are excellent even to perfection, so let them remain. Who, with unhallowed hand, would tear away the veil? If your mother was better than any other mother, your home more comfortable, your garden more beautiful, or even your own dog the most faithful, it is well. Memory will there linger with delight, so long as this world is your dwelling-place.

But there are a large class of prejudices imbibed from parents or teachers. Almost the whole of your knowledge comes under this denomination. You have taken it from others without examination, and it is natural and right that it should be so. Weak, dependent youth, must be kept in leading-strings; but when years have given maturity and strength, the bounding spirit frees itself. Prejudices, venerable from antiquity, are often fondly cherished, possessing a poetical beauty, of which philosophy in vain attempts to rob them. Many prejudices derived from parents, it would be almost sacrilegious to destroy; such are those of home and country.

But each human being has an individual, moral, and intellectual existence, and must think, reason, judge, and act for himself, as an accountable moral agent. It becomes, then, a solemn duty to divest yourselves of those prejudices which dim the intellect, and obscure the right and the wrong, which should ever shine out in as clear and luminous contrast as the stars upon a wintry sky.

Some superstitious prejudices, handed down from one generation to another, are merely absurd; every one can laugh at them, and yet be more or less affected by them. It is strange how many such still retain their hold on the minds of thousands, amid all the increasing light and knowledge of our age. In our larger towns, such, we believe, are now happily disappearing; but among our rural population, lucky or unlucky days, good and evil omens, dreams, and the like bugbears of the fancy's creation, still retain

their influence over many minds. Many such are inconceivably silly ; yet their influence is not the less strong and widely felt. Not the school-girl alone, but many a strong-minded man, will turn away with anxious look from the crescent moon, as she lightly sails in the eastern horizon, if the first glance of her be caught over the left shoulder. The folly of this superstition is readily acknowledged ; yet there are few who have heard in their childhood that such things are ominous of evil, who have not a preference for seeing her pale majesty peering over the right shoulder, although the next hour, or even the next moment, it may be forgotten.

So it is with Friday, poor unlucky Friday, from time immemorial under the ban of prejudice. Many carry through life an absolute dread of beginning any important undertaking on this unfortunate day. They may have been told there was one who, despising this superstition—a bold, adventurous mariner—purposely commenced building a ship on Friday, launched it on Friday, named it Friday, and sailed from port on Friday ; and the consequence was that it was lost, presumptuous captain and all ! Doubtless this is the invention of some would-be-wise one, to perpetuate this silly superstition.

The ill-omen that accompanies the breaking of a looking-glass has saved thousands of them from destruction, and was, perhaps, invented by some cunning housewife, to secure the valued piece of furniture from rough handling by careless servants. These, and sundry other foolish superstitions, are harmless matters of sport to instructed, philosophic minds, to which they nevertheless cling with surprising tenacity. There are other superstitions long maintaining their tyranny of fear over the youthful mind. How powerful, how mysterious, are these influences ! Shadows have been cast over life, by tales told at the nursery fireside, or during stolen visits to the kitchen chimney-corner ; and in after years, what witchery has held the listening circle of school-girls spell-bound, while the graphic narrator of ghost-stories made the heart thrill with mingled fear and

delight. So felt Orra, the heroine of one of Joanna Baillie's vigorous tragedies.

- " Orra. How, pray! what fearful thing did scare him so?
 Cathrina. Hast thou ne'er heard the story of Count Hugo,
 His ancestor who slew the hunter-knight?
 Orra (eagerly). Tell it, I pray thee,
 Alice. Cathrina, tell it not; it is not right!
 Such stories ever change her cheerful spirit
 To gloomy pensiveness; her rosy bloom
 To the wan colour of a shrouded corpse.
 (To Orra.) What pleasure is there, lady, when thy hand,
 Cold as the valley's ice, with hasty grasp
 Seizes on her who speaks, while thy shrunk form,
 Cowering and shivering, stands with keen-turned ear
 To catch what follows of the pausing tale?
 Orra. And let me cowering stand, and be my touch
 The valley's ice; there is a pleasure in it.
 Alice. Say'st thou, indeed, there is a pleasure in it?
 Orra. Yea, when the cold blood shoots through every vein;
 When every hair's pit on my shrunken skin
 A knotted knowl becomes, and to mine ears
 Strange inward sounds awake, and to mine eyes
 Rush stranger tears, there is a joy in fear.
 Tell it, Cathrina, for the life within me
 Beats thick, and stirs to hear it.

How hard it is for cool, sober reason, to overcome these phantoms of prejudice! it grapples with them, and they are overthrown, but not vanquished until after long and severe struggles. Such, however, are not the prejudices against which, we believe, our young readers have greatly to contend. The influence of increasing knowledge, and of sound Christian principles, has, we trust, banished such follies from their minds, and taught them to regard the ideas of unlucky days or evil omens as an insult to their understandings; while they have learned, under the influence of a well-regulated mind, to smile at the gravest ghost-story, even though told in mysterious whispers by the dim light of the fire, and amid the sighing gusts of a stormy winter's night.

But far more hurtful are the tangible prejudices against nations, sects, parties, and individuals, derived from high authority. Here, indeed, our opinions are as grains of wheat to the bushels of the chaff of prejudice. Many such we must unconsciously imbibe in youth, from the conversa-

tion of our seniors, and even not unfrequently from the example of our parents and kindest friends; while both parents and teachers cannot always avoid inculcating their own prejudices as lessons of truth. If prejudices are thus sedulously infused into the fountains of knowledge, the streams must flow forth tinged with bitterness.

The respect due to superiors does not involve the necessity of adopting their hurtful prejudices. The law of benevolence, superior to every other law, forbids such: "Love thy neighbour as thyself."

The mean and paltry prejudices of social rank, which are frequently manifested in the attempt to draw some artificial distinctions between the different circles of middle life, based for the most part on the contemptible standard of wealth, cannot be better designated than by the single word *vulgar*. There is, indeed, no more vulgar word in the English language than that one, *genteel*, which is so often on the lips of such social exclusives. Let us, however, relieve our pages by an example from real life:—

"I suppose you will all be off to S—— in a week or two," said uncle Joseph Garland to his three nieces, as he sat chatting with them and their mother one hot day about the first of July.

"We are not going to S—— this year," replied Emily, the eldest, with a toss of her head.

"Indeed! And why not, Emily?"

"Everybody goes to S—— now."

"Who do you mean by everybody, Emily?"

"Why, I mean merchants, shopkeepers, and tradesmen, with their wives and daughters, all mixed up together. It used to be a fashionable place of resort; but people that think anything of themselves do not go there now."

"Dear me, child!" ejaculated old uncle Joseph, in surprise. "This is all new to me. But you were there last year."

"I know. And that cured us all. There was not a day in which we were not thrown among the most vulgar kind of people."

"How vulgar, Emily?"

"Why, there was Mr. Jones, the watchmaker, with his wife and two daughters. I need not explain what I mean by vulgar, when I give you that information."

"I cannot say that I have any clearer idea of what you mean, Emily."

"You talk strangely, uncle! You do not suppose that we are going to associate with the Joneses?"

"I did not say that I did. Still I am in the dark as to what you mean by the most vulgar kind of people."

"Why, common people, brother," said Mrs. Ludlow, coming up to the aid of her daughter. "Mr. Jones is only a watchmaker, and therefore has no business to push himself and family into the company of genteel people."

"S—— is a place of public resort," was the quiet reply.

"Well, genteel people will have to stay away, then, that is all. I, at least, for one, am not going to be annoyed as I have been for the last two or three seasons at S——, by being thrown amongst all sorts of people."

"They never troubled me," said Florence Ludlow, the youngest of the three sisters. "For my part I liked Mary Jones very much. She was—"

"You are too much of a child to be able to judge in matters of this kind," said the mother, interrupting Florence.

Florence was fifteen; light-hearted and innocent. She had never been able, thus far in life, to appreciate the exclusive principles upon which her mother and sisters acted, and had, in consequence, frequently fallen under their censure. Purity of heart, and the genuine graces flowing from a truly feminine spirit, always attracted her, no matter what the station of the individual in whose society she happened to be thrown. The remark of her mother silenced her for the time, for experience had taught her that no good ever resulted from a repetition of her opinions on a subject of this kind.

"And I trust she will ever remain the child she is, in these matters," said uncle Joseph, with emphasis. "It is the duty of every one, sister, to do all that he can to set

aside the false ideas of distinction prevailing in the social world, and to build up, on a broader and truer foundation, a right estimate of men and things. Florence, I have observed, discriminates according to the quality of the person's mind into whose society she is thrown, and estimates accordingly. But you, and Emily, and Adeline, judge of people according to their rank in society—that is, according to the position to which wealth alone has raised them. In this way, and in no other, can you be thrown so into association with ‘all kinds of people,’ as to be really affected by them. For the result of my observation is, that in any circle where a mere external sign is the passport to association ‘all sorts of people,’ the good, the bad, and the indifferent, are mingled. It is not a very difficult thing for a bad man to get rich, sister; but for a man of evil principles to rise above them, is very hard indeed, and is an occurrence that too rarely happens. The consequence is, that they who are rich are not always the ones whom we should most desire to mingle with.”

“I do not see that there is any use in our talking about these things, brother,” replied Mrs. Ludlow. “You know that you and I never did agree in matters of this kind. As I have often told you, I think you incline to be rather low in your social views.”

“How can that be a low view which regards the quality of another, and estimates him accordingly?” was the reply.

“I do not pretend to argue with you on these subjects, brother; so you will oblige me by dropping them,” said Mrs. Ludlow, colouring, and speaking in an offended tone.

“Well, well, never mind,” uncle Joseph replied soothingly; “we will drop them.”

Then turning to Emily, he continued—

“And so your minds are made up not to go to S——?”

“Yes, indeed.”

“Well, where do you intend spending the summer months?”

“I hardly know yet. But, if I have my choice, we will

take a trip to the Continent. A flying visit to Paris would be delightful."

"What does your father say to that?"

"Why, he won't listen to it. But I shall do my best to bring him round—and so will Adeline. As for Florence, I believe I shall ask father to let her go to S—— with the Joneses."

"I shall have no very decided objections," was the quiet reply of Florence. A half angry and reproving glance from her mother, warned her to be more discreet in the declaration of her sentiments.

"A young lady should never attempt to influence her father," said uncle Joseph. "She should trust to his judgment in all matters, and be willing to deny herself any pleasure to which he objected. If your father will not listen to your proposition to go to Paris, be sure that he has some good reason for it."

"Well, I do not know that he has such very good reasons, beyond his reluctance to go away from business," Emily replied, tossing her head.

"And should not you, as his daughter, consider this a most conclusive reason? Ought not your father's wishes and feelings to be considered first?"

"You may consider it so, uncle; but I cannot say that I do."

"Emily!" and uncle Joseph spoke in an excited tone of voice, "if you hold these sentiments, you are unworthy of such a father!"

"Brother, you must not speak to the girls in that way," said Mrs. Ludlow.

"I shall always speak my thoughts in your house, Margaret," was the reply; "at least to you and the girls. As far as Mr. Ludlow is concerned, I have rarely occasion to differ with him."

A long silence followed, broken at last by an allusion to some other subject; when a better understanding among all parties ensued.

On that evening, Mr. Ludlow seemed graver than usual

when he came in. After tea, Emily said, breaking in upon a conversation that had become somewhat interesting to Mr. Ludlow—

“I am not going to let you have a moment’s peace, pa’, until you consent to go to Paris with us this season.”

“I am afraid it will be a long time before I shall have any peace then, Emily,” replied the father, with an effort to smile, but evidently annoyed by the remark. This, Florence, who was sitting close by him, perceived instantly, and said—

“Well, I can tell you for one, pa’, that I do not wish to go. I would rather stay at home a hundred times.”

“It is no particular difference, I presume, what you like,” remarked Emily, ill-naturedly. “If you do not wish to go, I suppose no one will quarrel with you for staying at home.”

“You are wrong to talk so, Emily,” said Mr. Ludlow, calmly but firmly, “and I cannot permit such remarks in my presence.”

Emily looked rebuked, and Mr. Ludlow proceeded—

“As to going to Paris, that is altogether out of the question. The reasons why it is so are various, and I cannot now make you acquainted with all of them. One is, that I cannot leave my business so long as such a journey would require. Another is, that I do not think it altogether right for me to indulge you in such views and feelings as you and Adeline are beginning to entertain. You wish to go to Paris, because you do not choose to go to S——, or to any other of our watering-places; and you do not want to go there, because certain others, whom you esteem below you in rank, can afford to enjoy themselves and recruit their health at the same places of public resort. All this I do not approve, and cannot encourage.”

“You certainly cannot wish us to associate with every one,” said Emily, in a tone less arrogant.

“Of course not, Emily,” replied Mr. Ludlow; “but I do most decidedly condemn the spirit from which you are now acting. It would exclude others, many of whom, in moral character, are far superior to yourself, from enjoying the

pleasant, health-imparting recreation of a visit to the Springs, because it hurts your self-importance to be brought into brief contact with them."

"I cannot understand what you mean by speaking of these kind of people as superior in moral character to us," Mrs. Ludlow remarked.

"I said some of them. And, in this, I mean what I say. Wealth and station in society do not give moral tone. They are altogether extraneous, and too frequently exercise a deteriorating influence upon the character. There is Thomas, the porter in my store; a plain, poor man, of limited education; yet possessing high moral qualities, that I would give much to call my own. This man's character I esteem far above that of many in society to whom no one thinks of objecting. There are hundreds and thousands of humble and unassuming persons like him, far superior in the high moral qualities of mind to the mass of self-esteeming exclusives, who think the very air around them tainted by their breath. Do you suppose that I would enjoy less the pleasures of a few weeks at S——, because Thomas was there? I would rather be gratified to see him enjoying a brief relaxation, if his duties at the warehouse could be remitted in my absence."

There was so much of the appearance of truth in what Mr. Ludlow said, combined with a decided tone and manner, that neither his wife nor daughters ventured a reply. But they had no affection for the truth he uttered, and of course it made no salutary impression on their minds.

"What shall we do, mamma?" asked Adeline, as they sat with their mother, on the next afternoon. "We must go somewhere this summer, and papa seems in earnest about not letting us visit Paris."

"I do not know, I am sure, child," was the reply.

"I cannot think of going to S——," said Emily, in a positive tone.

"The Emmersons are going," Adeline remarked.

"How do you know?" asked Emily, in a tone of surprise.

"Victorine told me so this morning."

"She did!"

"Yes. I met her at Mrs. Lemmington's, and she said that they were all going next week."

"I do not understand that," said Emily, musingly.

"It was only last week that Victorine told me that they were done with going to S——; that the place had become too common. It had been settled, she said, that they were to go to the Continent."

"Mr. Emmerson, I believe, would not consent, and so, rather than not go anywhere, they concluded to visit S——, especially as the Lesters, and Milfords, and Lup-ton's are going."

"Are they all going?" asked Emily, in renewed surprise.

"So Victorine said."

"Well, I declare there is no kind of dependence to be placed in people now-a-days. They all told me that they could not think of going to such a vulgar place as S—— again."

Then, after a pause, Emily resumed—

"As it will never do to stay at home, we will have to go somewhere. What do you think of the St. R—— Springs, mamma?"

"I think that I am not going there, to be half jolted to death in a stage-coach by the way."

"Where, then, shall we go?"

"I do not know, unless to S——."

"Victorine said," remarked Adeline, "that a large number of distinguished visitors were to be there, and that it was thought the season would be the gayest spent for some time."

"I suppose we shall have to go, then," said Emily.

"I am ready," responded Adeline.

"And so am I," said Florence.

That evening Mr. Ludlow was graver and more silent than usual. After tea, as he felt no inclination to join in the general conversation about the sayings and doings of distinguished and fashionable individuals, he took a newspaper, and endeavoured to become interested in its contents. But

he tried in vain. There was something upon his mind that absorbed his attention at the same time that it oppressed his feelings. From a deep reverie he was at length roused by Emily, who said—

"So, papa, you are determined not to let us go to the Continent this season?"

"Do not talk to me on that subject any more, if you please," replied Mr. Ludlow, much annoyed at the remark.

"Well, that is all given up now," continued Emily, "and we have made up our minds to go to S——. How soon will you be able to go with us?"

"Not just now," was the brief, evasive reply.

"We do not want to go until next week."

"I am not sure that I can go even then."

"O, but we must go then, papa."

"You cannot go without me," said Mr. Ludlow, in a grave tone.

"Of course not," replied Emily and Adeline at the same moment.

"Suppose, then, I cannot leave the city next week?"

"But you can, surely."

"I am afraid not. Business matters press upon me, and will, I fear, engage my exclusive attention for several weeks to come."

"O, but indeed you must lay aside business," said Mrs. Ludlow. "It will never do for us to stay at home, you know, during the season when everybody is away."

"I shall be very sorry if circumstances arise to prevent you having your regular summer recreation," was replied, in a serious, even sad tone. "But, I trust my wife and daughters will acquiesce with cheerfulness."

"Indeed, indeed, papa! We never can stay at home," said Emily, with a distressed look. "How would it appear? What would people say if we were to remain in the city during all the summer?"

"I do not know, Emily, that you should consider that as having any relation to the matter. What have other people to do with matters which concern us alone?"

"You talk very strangely of late, Mr. Ludlow," said his wife.

"Perhaps I have reason for so doing," he responded, a shadow fitting across his face.

An embarrassing silence ensued, which was broken, at last, by Mr. Ludlow.

"Perhaps," he began, "there may occur no better time than the present, to apprise you all of a matter that must, sooner or later, become known to you. We will have to make an effort to reduce our expenses; and it seems to me that this matter of going to the Springs, which will cost some sixty or seventy pounds, might as well be dispensed with. Business is in a worse condition than I have ever known it; and I am sustaining, almost daily, losses that are becoming alarming. Within the last six weeks I have lost, beyond hope, at least four thousand pounds. How much more will go I am unable to say. But there are large sums due to me that may follow the course of that already gone. Under these circumstances, I am driven to the necessity of prudence in all my expenditures."

"But sixty or seventy pounds are not much, papa," Emily urged, in a husky voice, and with dimmed eyes; for the fear of not being able to go somewhere was terrible to her. None but vulgar people stayed at home during the summer season.

"It is too large a sum to throw away now. So I think you had all better conclude at once not to go from home this summer," said Mr. Ludlow.

A gush of tears from Emily and Adeline followed this annunciation, accompanied by a look of decided disapprobation from the mother. Mr. Ludlow felt deeply tried, and for some moments his resolution wavered; but reason came to his aid, and he remained firm. He was accounted a very rich merchant. In good times, he had entered into business, and prosecuted it with great energy. The consequence was, that he had accumulated money rapidly. The social elevation consequent upon this, was too much for his wife. Her good sense was not equal to it. She not only became

impressed with the idea, that, because she was richer, she was better than others, but that only such customs were to be tolerated in "good society" as were different from prevalent usages in the mass. Into this idea her two eldest daughters were thoroughly inducted. Mr. Ludlow, immersed in business, thought little about such matters, and suffered himself to be led into almost anything that his wife and daughters proposed. But Mrs. Ludlow's brother—uncle Joseph, as he was called—a bachelor, and a man of strong common sense, steadily opposed his sister in her false notions, but with little good effect. Necessity at last called into proper activity the good sense of Mr. Ludlow, and he commenced the opposition that has just been noticed. After reflecting some time upon the matter, he resolved not to assent to his family leaving home at all during the summer.

All except Florence were exceedingly distressed at this. She acquiesced with gentleness and patience, although she had much desired to spend a few weeks at S——. But Mrs. Ludlow, Emily, and Adeline, closed up the front part of the house, and gave directions to the servants not to answer the door bell, nor to do anything that would give the least suspicion that the family were in town. Then ensconcing themselves in the back buildings of their dwelling, they waited in gloomy indolence for the "out of town" season to pass away, consoling themselves with the idea, that if they were not permitted to join the fashionables at the Springs, it would at least be supposed that they had gone somewhere into the country; and thus they hoped to escape the terrible penalty of losing caste from not conforming to an indispensable rule of fashionable life.

Mr. Ludlow was compelled to submit to all this, and he did so without much opposition; but it all determined him to follow out a steady opposition to the false principles which prompted such absurd observances. As to uncle Joseph, he was indignant, and failing to gain admittance by way of the front door after one or two trials, he determined not to go near his sister and nieces, a promise which he kept for a few weeks at least.

Meantime, everything was passing off pleasantly at S——. Among the distinguished and undistinguished visitors there, was Mary Jones, and her father, a man of both wealth and worth, notwithstanding he was only a watchmaker and jeweller. Mary was a girl of no ordinary character. With beauty of person exceeding that of the Misses Ludlow, she had a well-cultivated mind, and was far more really and truly accomplished than they were. Necessarily, therefore, she attracted attention at the Springs; and this had been one cause of Emily's objection to her.

A day or two after her arrival at S——, she was sitting near a window of the public parlour of one of the hotels, when a young man, named Armand, whom she had seen there several times before during the former season, in company with Emily Ludlow, with whose family he appeared to be on intimate terms, came up to her and introduced himself.

"Pardon me, Miss Jones," said he, "but not seeing any of the Miss Ludlows here, I presumed that you might be able to inform me whether they intend visiting S—— or not this season, and therefore I have broken through all formalities in addressing you. You are well acquainted with Florence, I believe?"

"Very well, sir," Mary replied.

"Then, perhaps, you can answer my question?"

"I believe I can, sir. I saw Florence several times within the last week or two; and she says that they shall not visit any of the Springs this season."

"Indeed! And how comes that?"

"I believe the reason is no secret," Mary replied, utterly unconscious that any one could be ashamed of a right motive, and that an economical one. "Florence tells me that her father has met with many heavy losses in business; and that they think it best not to incur any unnecessary expenses. I admire such a course in them."

"And so do I, most sincerely," replied Mr. Armand. Then, after thinking for a moment, he added—

"I will return to the city in the next boat. All of their friends being away, they must feel exceedingly lonesome."

"It will certainly be a kind act, Mr. Armand, and one the motive for which they cannot but highly appreciate," said Mary, with an inward glow of admiration.

It was about eleven o'clock on the next day, that Mr. Armand pulled the bell at the door of Mr. Ludlow's beautiful dwelling, and then waited with a feeling of impatience for the servant to answer the summons. But he waited in vain. No servant came. He rang again, and again waited long enough for a servant to come half a dozen times. Then he looked up at the house, and saw that all the shutters were closed; and down upon the steps, and perceived that they were covered with dust and dirt; and on the bell-handle, and noted its loss of brightness.

"Miss Jones must have been mistaken," said he to himself, as he gave the bell a third pull, and then waited, but in vain, for the hall-door to be swung open.

"Who can it be?" asked Emily, a good deal disturbed, as the bell rang violently for the third time, and, in company with Adeline, went softly into the parlour to take a peep through one of the shutters.

"Mr. Armand, as I live!" she ejaculated, in a low, husky whisper, turning pale. "I would not have him know that we are in town for the world!"

And then she stole away quietly, with her heart leaping and fluttering in her bosom, lest he should instinctively perceive her presence.

Finding that admission was not to be obtained, Mr. Armand concluded that the family had gone to some other watering-place, and turned away irresolute as to his future course. As he was passing down Broadway, he met uncle Joseph.

"So the Ludlows are all out of town," he said.

"So they are not!" replied uncle Joseph, rather crustily, for he had just been thinking over their strange conduct, and it irritated him.

"Why, I have been ringing there for a quarter of an hour, and no one came to the door; and the house is all shut up."

"Yes; and if you had rung for a quarter of a century, it would have been all the same."

"I cannot understand you," said Mr. Armand.

"Why, the truth is, Mr. Ludlow cannot go to the Springs with them this season, and they are so afraid that it will become known, that they are burying themselves in the back part of the house, and denying all visitors."

"Why so? I cannot comprehend it."

"All fashionable people, you know, are expected to go to the sea-shore or the Springs; and my sister and her two eldest daughters are so silly, as to fear that they will lose caste, if it is known that they could not go this season. Do you understand now?"

"Perfectly."

"Well, that is the plain A B C of the case. But it provokes me out of all patience with them."

"It is a strange idea, certainly," said Mr. Armand, in momentary abstraction of thought; and then bidding uncle Joseph good morning, he walked hastily along, his mind in a state of fermentation.

The truth was, Mr. Armand had become much attached to Emily Ludlow, for she was a girl of imposing appearance and winning manners. But this staggered him. If she were such a slave to fashion and observance, she was not the woman for his wife. As he reflected upon the matter, and reviewed his intercourse with her, he could remember many things in her conversation and conduct that he did not like. He could distinctly detect a degree of self-estimation consequent upon her station in society, that did not meet his approbation; because it indicated a weakness of mind that he had no wish to have in a wife. The wealth of her father he had not regarded, nor did he now regard it, for he was himself possessed of an independence.

Two days after, he was again at S——. The brief interview that had passed between him and Mary Jones was a sufficient introduction for him; and, taking advantage of it, he threw himself in her way frequently, and the more he saw of her, the more did he admire her winning

gentleness, sweet temper, and good sense. When he returned to New York, he was more than half in love with her.

"Mr. Armand has not been to see us once this autumn," said Adeline, one evening in October. They were sitting in a handsomely furnished parlour in a neat dwelling, comfortable and commodious, but not so splendid as the one they had occupied a few months previous. Mr. Ludlow's affairs had become so embarrassed, that he determined, in spite of the opposition of his family, to reduce his expenses. This resolution he carried out amid tears and remonstrances, for he could not do it in any other way.

"Who could expect him to come here?" Emily replied to the remark of her sister; "not I, certainly."

"I do not believe that would make any difference with him," Florence ventured to say, for it was little that she could say that did not meet with opposition.

"Why do you not?" asked Adeline.

"Because Mary Jones—"

"Mary Jones again!" ejaculated Emily. "I believe you do not think of anybody but Mary Jones. I am surprised that mamma lets you visit that girl!"

"As good people as I am visit her," replied Florence; "I have seen those there who would be welcome here."

"What do you mean?"

"If you had waited until I had finished my sentence, you would have known before now. Mary Jones lives in a house no better than this, and Mr. Armand goes to see her."

"I do not believe it!" said Emily, with emphasis.

"Just as you like about that. Seeing is believing, they say; and as I have seen him there, I can do no less than believe he was there."

"When did you see him there?" Emily now asked with eager interest, while her face grew pale.

"I saw him there last evening—and he sat conversing with Mary in a way that showed them to be no strangers to each other."

A long, embarrassed, and painful silence followed this

announcement. At last, Emily got up and went off to her chamber, where she threw herself upon her bed and burst into tears. After these ceased to flow, and her mind had become, in some degree, tranquillized, her thoughts became busy. She remembered that Mr. Armand had called while they were hiding in fear lest it should be known that they were not on a fashionable visit to some watering-place, how he had rung and rung repeatedly, as if under the idea that they were there, and how his countenance expressed disappointment as she caught a glimpse of it through the closed shutters. With all this, came also the idea that he might have discovered that they were at home, and have despised the principle from which they acted, in thus shutting themselves up and denying all visitors. This thought was exceedingly painful. It was evident to her that it was not their changed circumstances that kept him away—for had he not visited Mary Jones!

Uncle Joseph came in a few evenings afterwards, and during his visit the following conversation took place:—

"Mr. Armand visits Mary Jones, I am told," Adeline remarked, as an opportunity for saying so occurred.

"He does! Well, she is a good girl—one in a thousand," replied uncle Joseph.

"She is only a watchmaker's daughter," said Emily, with an ill-concealed sneer.

"And you are only a merchant's daughter. Pray, what is the difference?"

"Why, a good deal of difference."

"Well, state it."

"Mr. Jones is nothing but a mechanic."

"Well!"

"Who thinks of associating with mechanics?"

"There may be some who refuse to do so; but upon what grounds do they assume a superiority?"

"Because they are really above them."

"But in what respect?"

"They are better and more esteemed in society."

"As to their being better, that is only an assumption."

But I see I must bring the matter home. 'Would you be really any worse were your father a mechanic?'

"The question is not a fair one. You suppose an impossible case."

"Not so impossible as you might imagine. You are the daughter of a mechanic."

"Brother, why will you talk so! I am out of all patience with you!" said Mrs. Ludlow, angrily.

"And yet, no one knows better than you that I speak only the truth. No one knows better than you, that Mr. Ludlow served originally at the trade of a shoemaker; and that, consequently, these high-minded young ladies, who sneer at mechanics, are themselves a shoemaker's daughters—a fact that is just as well known abroad as anything else relating to the family. And now, Misses Emily and Adeline, I hope you will hereafter find it in your hearts to be a little more tolerant of mechanics' daughters."

And thus saying, uncle Joseph rose, and bidding them good-night, left them to their own reflections, which were not of the most pleasant character, especially as the mother could not deny the allegation he had made.

During the next summer, Mr. Ludlow, whose business was no longer embarrassed, and who had become satisfied that, although he should sink a large proportion of a handsome fortune, he would still have a competence left, and that well secured, he proposed to visit S——, as usual. There was not a dissenting voice, no objecting on the score of meeting vulgar people there. The painful fact disclosed by uncle Joseph, of their plebeian origin, and the marriage of Mr. Armand—whose station in society was not to be questioned—with Mary Jones, the watchmaker's daughter, had softened and subdued their tone of feeling, and caused them to set up a new standard of estimation. The old one would not do, for, judged by that, they would have to hide their diminished heads. Their conduct at the Springs was far less objectionable than it had been heretofore, partaking of the modest and retiring in deportment, rather than the assuming, the arrogant, and the self-sufficient. Mrs. Armand

was there, with her sister, moving in the first circles; and Emily Ludlow and her sister Adeline felt honoured rather than humiliated by an association with them. It is to be hoped they will yet make sensible women.

Blind prejudices such as these degrade the understanding as well as cramp the heart. The semi-civilized nations of the East, bound by the prejudices of caste, reject all innovations and improvements, although they might thereby be relieved from the oppression and suffering which they endure. The Chinese remain from generation to generation imitative and ingenious; but, fettered by prejudice, they rarely adopt the improvements of other nations. The Turks seemed by their religion and civil polity as impregnably fortified against "the march of mind," as their beautiful Golden Horn is against a foreign foe. The present Sultan has exercised his influence to some extent in levelling these barriers; and more has been thus accomplished by his single might, than had been effected by all other Moslem minds since the days of Mahomet. The change, however, it is to be feared, has been too entirely foreign in its source, to be altogether beneficial. The destruction of a people's nationality is like the eradication of the domestic ties and the home affections of the individual. Such heart prejudices, when wisely regulated, can never be too fondly cherished. The casting off of national bigotry, and the getting rid of antiquated customs and false ideas, is an element of progress which cannot be too highly valued. Every people has somewhat to unlearn, and may reap some benefits from the experience and the practice of other nations. The prejudices of nations, as of individuals, in the same manner, prevent that range of thought, that expansion of the understanding, in which an emancipated mind rejoices.

Prejudices derived from books. More weight is attached, and firmer credence given, to what is printed, than to what is orally communicated. No little child doubts what he has read in a book. "Why, I have seen it in print!" is no uncommon assertion to prove that a thing is true. The very pic-

tures scattered about the nursery may give lasting prejudices. Some pictures, not designed for children, are most unlucky caricatures, indelibly fixing ludicrous associations in the memory. "In a picture of the temptation of Eve, Fuseli has put on the serpent the head of a young man with wings. The reptile is there the size of a boa-constrictor, smiling to fascinate, and twisting round the fatal tree. With the same degree of attention to literal construction, such painters, if they intended to represent a scene in the land of Canaan, might characterize it, probably with equal truth, by a river of milk, and another of honey, with whatever else might in their ideas add to the literal effect." Another fanciful, or rather matter-of-fact and altogether unfanciful illustration, represents the prophet Isaiah, with his tongue extended, while a large-winged angel, with a pair of immense tongs, is touching it with a coal. Such illustrations are, at best, ludicrous. Some of them are even profane; and the impressions left on the young mind by all of them must be more or less injurious. Happily a much greater attention is paid to such means of infantile education; and pictures are now prepared for the nursery, calculated at once to cultivate the taste and to inform the mind. With more advanced childhood come the story-books, from whence so many false notions of human life are derived. The reward of virtue, and the punishment of vice, are described as invariably enjoyed and suffered in this life; or worse, the pleasures of sense are set up as idols for the full heart's first worship. Here also, however, we enjoy advantages such as our fathers and mothers had no conception of; and where parents or teachers exercise a wise discrimination, there is no lack of books, admirably adapted for the youthful mind. But then comes the season when the fictions of the novelist assume a value far above all which relates to the sober realities of ordinary life. The excited fancy delights to live in the dream-land of its own creation, and to picture a future for itself, woven of "such stuff as dreams are made of." Many of my fair readers can remember such a period; if, indeed, it yet be past with them.

Then, the enchantress's spell of romance held you, not in durance vile, but in fancy-land—lovely, beautiful, deceitful fancy-land; looking from its fascinating realms upon the world around you, even the most elevating and useful pursuits of the beings of real life appear worthless and contemptible. No moated castles and gallant knights, as of olden times.

No possibility, as it seemed, for you to share in romantic enterprises and noble deeds, as did these heroines of old. And yet, in reality, this age of ours, with its steam-ships, its railways, its electric telegraphs, its great political changes, and its noble philanthropic schemes and missionary enterprises, would have appeared to the men and the women of these olden times, more replete with romance, and richer in opportunities for true heroic deeds than all the ages that have preceded it. But even our choicest literature must be read with a clear and discriminating judgment.

History and poetry implant their prejudices. War, painted by genius, has a glory not easily dissipated. Strange, that the timid, shrinking nature of woman should delight in the recital of deeds, the sight of which would freeze her heart's blood!

Military greatness, in this age of nobler aspirations, must be cast down from the high pedestal where it has so long been worshipped. Ambition has a lofty look and noble bearing, as poetry delineates him; but rob him of the mask and graceful drapery in which she has enveloped him, and often he stands forth but mean ambition or contemptible selfishness.

Each historian, too, has his peculiar prejudices: according to some, Oliver Cromwell is a patriot, a Christian hero, almost a demigod; while many more represent him as a false-hearted hypocrite. Looking at the vast array of prejudices which have thus usurped dominion over the human mind, perhaps you may feel ready to exclaim with Pilate, "What is truth?"

Selfish prejudices. Their name is Legion. How readily we turn what we call in our pride "the telescope of truth,"

to magnify or diminish, as suits our self-love! Frivolous pursuits, unattainable pleasures, difficulties to be encountered, enemies to be overcome—how mighty they appear! Reverse the tube. The more noble, the philanthropic, the patriotic pursuits of the good, their excellences of character, the sacred interests of others—how insignificant they seem! “The reason why we so seldom carry on the happy vivacity of youth into mature age, is, that we form to ourselves a higher standard of enjoyment than we can realize, and that our passions gradually fasten on certain favourite objects, which, in proportion to their magnitude, are of rare occurrence, and for the most part out of our reach.”

Instead of thus wasting life in grasping at shadows, look at your real condition; consider its capabilities for happiness and for doing good. *C'est le premier pas que coute.* Give up to-day some darling prejudice to which you have fondly clung, and to-morrow another, and still another will be vanquished. Be not disheartened. Be candid, be sincere, be in earnest, and you have the promise of a holy Guide, who will lead you into “all truth.” Ask and it shall be given you: strength in the hour of weakness; courage in danger; firmness amid temptations; and that greatest of all gifts, God’s Holy Spirit, which, reigning in your heart, shall be your guide, instructor, and prompter, leading you into all truth, raising you above every prejudice, delivering you from all temptations, and carrying you scathless through the trials and dangers of life. And if the weakness of a spirit enshrouded in clay shut out some glorious truths from dwellers on earth, the promise shall be fully accomplished when you drop this mortal covering, and pass from the shore of death immediately into that world where error and prejudice are unknown—when you shall no longer see as through a cloud, darkly, but face to face with Him, who shall be the light and the sun of the eternal city.

CHAPTER XXIV.

CONSISTENCY OF CHARACTER.

"Thy hopes, are they steadfast, and holy, and high?
 Are they built on a rock? Are they raised to the sky?
 Thy deep secret yearnings, O, whither point they?
 To the triumphs of earth, to the toys of a day?
 Thy friendships and feelings—doth *impulse* prevail,
 To make them, and mar them, as wind swells the sail?
 Thy life's ruling passion—thy being's first aim—
 What are they? and yield they contentment or shame?"

MISS JEWELLERY.

CONSISTENCY of character is the very keystone of the arch, giving completeness and strength to all the virtues. Valuable as it is, however, it is quite possible to be consistent in error, in evil, in sin.

In order to be consistent in the right way, you must have a just sense of the importance of the objects at which you aim. A consistent lawyer, in the estimation of some, is one who applies all his learning, his zeal, and his eloquence, to gain a bad cause as well as a good one. A consistent fine lady is one whose parties are the most splendid, whose dresses are made by the most fashionable dressmaker, whose bonnets are the perfection of elegance, whose manners are as regulated as her watch, to suit all times and occasions, and who pays her tradesmen, or not, just as suits her convenience. A consistent politician is expected by the political partisan to go all lengths with his party, right or wrong, even though the measures of the party tend to the destruction of his country. In these cases, unity of purpose produces consistency, and consistency gives power. You thus perceive, that the first great aim of your life must be to place before you an honourable and worthy course which you propose to adopt; and that done, to pursue it with such consistency as shall make every effort a step in the same wise direction. It therefore becomes of the most consequence to ascertain what is your aim. The

question here is, not what you know, or what you are, but what you intend to be. The passionate lover of science climbs the fearful precipice, and perils life itself for a single little flower, belonging to a genus that is wanting in his herbarium. What efforts should be deemed too great, to attain each flower of beauty that adorns the garland of woman's worth?

I know a lady—would that her modesty would permit me to name her—who furnishes an admirable example of consistency of character.

As a Christian, she has fervent piety, without the least tincture of austerity. She is liberal and catholic in her views and feelings towards other denominations, and at the same time maintains a strong and wholesome attachment to the church to which she belongs, which springs from matured convictions and settled principles. With genuine meekness and humility, she possesses self-respect, and does not disclaim the respect of others. Her cheerfulness springs from equanimity, contentment, and the peace of a good conscience; she is never light-minded and frivolous. In her most sober moments, she is not gloomy. She has quickness of perception to discern whatever is sinful in others, and moral courage to warn and reprove, without severity or bitterness toward the offender. Her charity is open, but not ostentatious. Possessing uncommon disinterestedness, her motives are often misunderstood by the selfish, and oftener misrepresented; yet she submits to reproach without a murmur; though naturally extremely susceptible to public opinion, she has fortified her mind to meet injustice. She yields to the world when it would be unwise to differ; but makes no compromise that involves a sacrifice of principle. Although uncommonly active in doing good to all within her sphere of usefulness, she neglects not the culture of that personal, spiritual religion, which results from secret devotion and close habitual self-examination.

This lady's intellectual character has been mostly formed by self-education; the foundation, however, must have been

well laid; in perfecting the superstructure, the ornamental part has not been neglected, though it is rather of the simple, chaste Doric order, than the more elaborate Corinthian. She is learned, without the slightest approach to pedantry. Her memory is so tenacious, that she is minute and circumstantial, but not tedious. The expressions she uses in conversation are so clear and correct, that you become possessed of her ideas, scarcely perceiving the medium through which they have been communicated. Her imagination is vivid and lively, but sobered and chastened by a strong discriminating judgment. Hers is not a masculine mind; it is peculiarly, sweetly feminine, so that her learning and her superiority are pardoned by the other sex; they sit so gracefully and becomingly, that they never obtrude themselves into notice.

My amiable friend's manners are the outward and visible sign of her noble character. Perhaps, in these free and easy days, they may be thought too formal; when dignity was considered essential, they would have been admired as a model. She is self-possessed, without that impudent assurance which provokes censure from its total indifference to public opinion, and wounds the beholder's self-esteem. In her dignity there is no haughtiness; the most timid and bashful girl would seek shelter under her superiority, sure of that kind considerateness which the highly gifted and naturally modest ever show to shrinking diffidence. The grace of this lady's manners is not altogether the borrowed grace of art that is termed elegance; her heart, full of love and good-will, diffuses kindness and gentleness over her whole demeanour.

In her intercourse with the world, and in her family, she has all the prudence necessary for the safe conduct of affairs. Her economy is systematic, without a touch of meanness. She knows the value of wealth for the comfort it secures, and as a means of bestowing benefits; her mind is too noble for avarice to find there a dwelling-place.

Her decision of character prevents her actions from being

the sport of circumstances. Her generosity is far removed from prodigality; she has the courage to say "no" to the most earnest solicitation for a popular charity, if her judgment does not fully approve, or her funds have been consecrated to some other use. Industrious herself, she is careful that her family imitate the example; yet their hours of recreation she strives to make agreeable, by joining cordially in promoting innocent hilarity.

This sketch might be thought incomplete, if nothing were said of the *momentous business* of the toilet. Our friend is not neglectful of her apparel; her dress is always scrupulously neat; but though it did not fit with the trim precision of a milliner's doll, she would be satisfied. She would not willingly offend the eye of good taste in the choice of colours; she would prefer being in the fashion to being out of it; yet it is evident that no time has been taken from other duties to attend to this, and that dress is not the first, second, and third thing in her mind. It comes up to the requisites of that safest and best standard for dress: it is equally little calculated to attract attention by its deficiencies as by its excesses, being neither ostentatiously plain nor extravagantly gay, but such as seems modestly suited to her rank and station in life.

Being thus beautifully consistent herself, it may be asked, Is not this lady a severe censor upon those who are less so? In example she may be, but in words never. The law of kindness dwells upon her lips, and the bright side of character in others seems ever present to her generous mind.

CHAPTER XXV.

MARRIAGE.

"The last ungathered rose on our ancestral tree."—HOLMES.

"WERE you ever in love, aunt!"

The lady to whom this startling question was addressed had seen at least fifty summers. Her sweet and tranquil face had been ruffled by few storms, yet there was just that shade of pensiveness which gives interest to such a countenance. A blush mantled the still rounded cheeks, and shot over her fair high forehead, as she replied—"That is a question seldom asked of an old maid of fifty."

"Forgive me, dearest aunt, but answer me," said Isabella, throwing her arms round aunt Susan's neck, much to the detriment of her snow-white plaited ruffles.

Aunt Susan. I will do both, on one condition—that you tell me what you have been thinking about this last half-hour; for, even by the dim light of the grate, your countenance betrayed that the subject was one of intense interest.

Isa. Indeed! Well, then, it is a great secret to-day, but to-morrow everybody will know it. Geraldine M—— was married this morning to that coxcomb, W——.

Aunt S. What! that very fashionable young man, whom you extolled last winter as so elegant, so interesting!

Isa. I might have been silly enough then to think he was interesting; but I never should have run away with him, as Geraldine has done, in opposition to her father.

Aunt S. And you, Isabella, were at the marriage! That accounts for your agitation and hurry this morning.

Isa. Yes, aunt, I had the honour of being bride's-maid to the happy couple; only two other persons were present, and, alas! there was no groom's-man. I suppose, had it not

been for a promise of long standing, there would have been no bride's-maid either. This, you remember, is the second time I have had to officiate in this manner. Geraldine made a match, all for love, in opposition to the wishes of every friend she has on earth. Poor Mrs. M—— will die with vexation, for he is not worth a sou. They told her long ago—father, mother, sister, brother, and all, down to the fourteenth cousin—that they would renounce her for ever, if she married W——. Now, there is romance for you. A very different affair from Clara Wilton's prim, unsentimental, humdrum wedding.

Aunt S. Different indeed ! That was every way a suitable match.

Isa. *Chacune a son gout.* I have always thought Clara's the most commonplace, dull, matter-of-fact courtship and marriage that ever happened. Mr. G——, fifteen years older than Clara, formed upon the old Sir Charles Grandison school, so accustomed to debating in parliament, that he always speaks as though he had the floor, and would not be interrupted. And as for Clara, she is a good girl; but now I think of it, the very counterpart of Miss Byron.

Aunt S. The disparity in age, of which you complain, is nothing at all.

Isa. Well, aunt, we will waive that discussion, and even leave Geraldine's affair for the whole town to discuss to-morrow morning, and take up the previous question. Were you ever in love ? But, dear aunt, I am a naughty child, and do not gratify my curiosity at the expense of your feelings.

Aunt S. Years have done their kindly work of healing ; I had almost said of obliteration. Yet I can remember enough to satisfy you, and can relate with calmness, I trust, what has never before passed my lips. Let me see, all stories begin, "Once there was——"

Isa. There was a young lady once in love !

Aunt S. And only once, Isabella. I had just returned from school, when I became acquainted with Leslie. For several years he was a frequent visitor at the house of my guardian.

Isa. And you fell in love with him, aunt Susan !

Aunt S. By no means. My affections were not so easily won. Avoid prudish reserve, and affected indifference ; but sully not the purity of your young heart by carrying it in your hand, ready to offer to the first man whom you encounter. I accepted Leslie's attentions, and a simple liking grew to a strong affection, when he professed the same for me ; but I must shorten this part of my story.

Isa. O no, no, I wish to hear all about it. Did he propose !

Aunt S. He did, and, after but little delay, was accepted.

Isa. But why any delay, if you loved him !

Aunt S. Nature, strong, all-powerful nature.

Isa. Art, all-powerful art. Were you not a little prudish in those days !

Aunt S. At the risk of seeming sentimental, I must answer, in the words of my favourite poet—

"Love's lightest, fondest weakness, maiden shame ;
It was not pride that hid my bosom's flame."

Isa. But I interrupt your story."

Aunt S. I have little to tell. The day was set for our marriage. Leslie had wealth, and the world pronounced him every inch a gentleman ; but alas ! he was totally destitute of religious principle. He had evaded me when I sought to draw him into conversation on this subject, and even allowed me—willing as I was to be deceived—to believe that he sympathized with me in faith, and in reverence for sacred things. But the disguise was slight and temporary, for its importance was estimated very low by him. In a conversation with my brother, your respected father, a few weeks before the time appointed for our marriage, Leslie betrayed his opinions ; he was an infidel. You would not wish me to describe the agony that this discovery produced. I will only add, that, after mature deliberation, I wrote to him, that until his prejudices were removed, and his opinions based upon revealed truth, I could never be his. Such an answer as he wrote ! it would chill you with horror ; he ridiculed my weakness, and all that is sacred

and holy. Can I be sufficiently grateful for that protecting Providence which saved me from uniting myself with one who might have destroyed my happiness in this life, and perilled that of my soul hereafter?

Isa. Did he ever marry, aunt?

Aunt S. He did, and broke the heart of a lovely woman, who lies in an untimely grave. Unrestrained by principle, and disappointed in schemes for political distinction, he resorted to gambling for excitement, and intemperance for forgetfulness; he died, and it is not forbidden to weep even over an infidel's grave. These melancholy reminiscences have brought others to my mind, which may serve as warnings to my sanguine Isabella. One of my early friends, much resembling yourself, married a weak-minded, vain man, whose self-love was so much stronger than his love for her, that she has been subjected to continual mortification. Notwithstanding her vivacity and gaiety in youth, she is a highly respectable and talented woman; but her husband everywhere makes himself ridiculous, so that she cannot be very happy, at home or abroad.

Isa. Never fear for me, aunt; I detest a fool.

Aunt S. But the glare of dress and fashion might blind you as it has done Geraldine.

Isa. I confess I was blinded for a short time; but W—— is not an absolute fool. To be on the safe side, I resolve that I never will marry a fashionable dandy.

Aunt S. Poor Amelia Saybury! She was the heiress of our circle. Her embroidered satins, her splendid muff and tippet, and, more than all, her beautiful set of pearls; what envy they excited! She married a man whose fortune, added to her own, seemed inexhaustible. They were excessively extravagant, and squandered it all; and now, as he has no profession, nor any kind of business, it is difficult to conceive how they are supported. It is said they are reduced to the most distressing poverty.

Isa. But you would not infer from this, that every man should have a profession or employment.

Aunt S. Even a man of wealth will never be the worse

of having mastered some useful occupation ; not that he may increase his wealth, but to render him more independent, useful to the world, and more prepared for the vicissitudes which all have reason to apprehend.

Isa. I never will marry an old curmudgeon, who would grudge me every shilling. Indeed, I would not marry an old man, whatever might be his rank, talents, or wealth.

Aunt S. Even at the risk of being that despised creature, an old maid !

Isa. That does not alarm me at all. Who is more beloved than aunt Susan ? And you surely are infinitely more happy than any of your companions who married.

Aunt S. You speak extravagantly, Isabella. I am more contented and cheerful than many of my married friends ; but I know some, who are united to men of sense and worth, who enjoy that assistance in life's rough journey, and that protection and guidance, which are very important to our feeble, timid sex. I would not have you suppose, my dear, that I undervalue what I do not possess.

Isa. There is one frightful fault that you have not mentioned—a violent temper. I was once visiting at a house where every one stood in dread of the tyrannical master. His poor wife trembled when she heard his step upon the threshold ; the children ran and hid themselves ; and the servant who opened the door durst not look within a yard of his countenance. When he entered the room where we were sitting, the poor woman cast a furtive glance to know what mood he was in, and when she saw the flush and frown upon his face, she grew pale, but endeavoured to smile. Such a lugubrious smile ! I have heard of the smile of a milestone ; hers looked more like the smile of a gravestone. I resolved then, that I would keep out of the way of such torments.

Aunt S. But even worse than the temper you have described, is the sullen, dogged, morose disposition that never breaks out into sunshine. You may sometimes expect generosity from the passionate man, and occasionally good humour ; but in this case, you have only dull, sluggish

indifference, however much you may need sympathy and kindness.

Isa. Well, aunt, there are as many obstacles in the way of matrimony as the damsel found who went for the talking bird, singing tree, and golden water.

Aunt S. And I cannot tell you of any enchantress's spell against them. Prudence and principle, two very serviceable handmaidens, may guard you on the right and left, and yet you may not escape all evils.

Isa. I fear I should make but a fickle diplomatist. The moment I discovered any odious trait in a man's character, I should say, "Excuse me, sir," and be off.

Aunt S. Be careful, then, how you enter into such an engagement. To break fealty without the most urgent reasons, proves either contemptible weakness of mind, heartlessness, want of delicate sensibility, or obtuseness of moral feeling. I hope, Isabella, you will not be so dishonourable nor so unprincipled.

Isa. Do not speak so seriously. I believe the best way is not to trouble myself about the matter.

Aunt S. You are right; and think as little about it, too, as possible. Make yourself worthy of love, and you will be contented in any situation. You have now to set yourself earnestly about improving your own character, lest you bring some of the evils upon another which you wish to avoid yourself.

Isa. Well, with the terror of bad husbands before my eyes, I shall, at least, not marry without the consent of my father, and the approbation of my prudent aunt. Let me see (holding up her fingers and counting upon them), I have predetermined not to marry—*First*, the infidel. *Secondly*, the immoral man. *Thirdly*, the silly Narcissus, who would make me blush for him every moment. *Fourthly*, the old man, rich or poor. *Fifthly*, the old—no, the young curmudgeon, for there are misers young and old; and the young will grow worse and worse every year, till he will out-Elwes Elwes, so I'll none of him. *Sixthly*, the extravagant idle man, who will soon be at his money's end and

his wit's end. *Seventhly*, the passionate tyrant. *Eighthly*, the morose, sour creature, who would turn the cream in my coffee by looking at it. *Ninthly*—have I counted all? Do give me a ninth and a tenth to make up the decalogue. I know there are a dozen more that would come upon the proscribed list, if I could only remember them.

Aunt S. Do not puzzle yourself, child, to muster any more. You will think me prejudiced, perhaps, in favour of my own condition, because I seem to you so happy. It is not so. As I look toward the downhill of life, it is a melancholy thought that I am alone, that I do not hold the first place in any human heart.

Isa. (fondly embracing her). But you have the love of everybody, dear aunt Susan, and a home wherever you are; next to my father, I love you better than anybody in the wide world.

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE CLAIMS OF SOCIETY.

"I'm weary of the crowded ball; I'm weary of the mirth
Which never lifts itself above the grosser things of earth
I'm weary of the flatterer's tone; its music is no more,
And eye and lip may answer not its meaning as before;
I'm weary of the heartless throng—of being deemed as one
Whose spirit kindles only in the blaze of fashion's sun.
Away! I will not fetter thus the spirit God hath given,
Nor stoop the pinion back to earth that beareth up to heaven."

WHITTIER.

If a claim be made upon the purse or the real estate of any one, immediately the questions are asked, What right has the person to make this claim? What is the extent of it? It must be defined precisely, and established legally, before it will be allowed. "The claims of society" is a phrase that is iterated and reiterated, and everybody, excepting only the misanthrope and the anchorite, acknowledges that it

has a great deal of meaning; while it is extremely difficult to decide the extent of those claims, differing, as they do, in almost every individual case.

Then what do we mean by society? Not our own family circle, the very heart's core; nor the next circle, consisting of kindred and intimate friends; nor still the next, which may be termed the circle of benevolence; but the outer circle, widening and still widening, till lost in the vanishing distance. And this, at first sight, seems *terra incognita*; yet its geography and topography are tolerably well understood, although the boundary-lines are not quite settled, and remain the subject of contention and animosity. Every town and village is thus divided into sets, determined chiefly by the station, intelligence, wealth, and fashion of their members; and my lady-reader will doubtless think it quite superfluous to have taken all this pains to come at the simple fact, that "the claims of society" are the rightful demands of the class to which she belongs, and the strangers who may be introduced to that set. Besides general benevolence and good-will, she does not acknowledge any claims from other classes, sets, or coteries. In town, what are the claims of the set or circle denominated society? Bowing in the street and at public places, making ceremonious calls, giving and attending dinner and evening parties. In the country they are much the same; for each little country town and village seems learning to ape, to the full extent of its ability, the manners and customs of the capital.

It has often been said that the character of a nation can be determined by its amusements; by this criterion individual character can be ascertained with satisfactory precision. Custom reconciles to the greatest absurdities, and even the most revolting cruelties. By way of amusement, the Roman women could watch with intense interest the sanguine gladiatorial exhibition, and behold the infuriated wild beast let loose upon the miserable captive, and tear in pieces the holy martyr. The ladies of Christian Europe, in the boasted days of chivalry, could look with joyous delight upon the tournament, where the gallant knight-

errant was not alone exposed to hard blows, wounds, and overthrow, but to death itself; for the interest of the scene was of course enhanced, when, in defence of the boasted charms of their lady-loves, the chivalrous and valiant knights challenged each other to mortal combat. The dark-eyed daughters of Spain still grace with their dignified presence the horrid bull-fights; and even some fair dames of England can become as excited by the pleasures of a horse-race, as the lady-squaws of the American Indians are delighted spectators of the savage war-dance. Germany and Austria have learned to seek excitement at the gaming-table; and France brings the lottery even to the aid of its missionary finances, and its home ecclesiastical schemes. In all these, ladies take a part; sharing with the debauched gamester the feverish and demoralizing excesses of the lottery and gaming-table, and mixing often with the most abandoned of the other sex. Custom must have amazing power, thus to change the very nature of woman.

If the amusements of our country are not disgraced as those of Spain and Portugal, by such revolting features as some of those incident to the fashionable pastimes of other countries, or older centuries, yet there may be some, which, if custom did not cast upon them her deceitful light, would look no less absurdly grotesque or frightfully ugly.

The immoral influence of the theatre is so generally acknowledged, that it seems scarcely necessary to dwell upon it here. It is daily becoming more rarely the resort of any but the most thoughtless or the most worldly and careless members of society. While the minds of the pure and the virtuous revolt from a delineation of the classes that systematically enter its polluted walls, and the scenes that are frequently presented as lessons in this school of vice; its defenders talk much of its "holding the mirror up to nature," and thus teaching morality. But the author of the phrase is guiltless of the intention of supporting, by word or works, the pseudo-morality of modern theatres.

Lord Londonderry, in his visit to Russia, was struck with the splendour of the ladies' dresses at the court of the auto-

crat; not a wrinkle nor accidental fold; they all looked fresh from the light fingers of the *modiste*. On inquiry, his lordship learnt that they were all brought from Paris, the mart of fashion for the world, and that the same dress was never worn twice. A lady who had three daughters in society, told him, that their dresses each cost two hundred roubles for an evening; the ornaments were not included. Many of the nobles are compelled to mortgage their estates to live in the style they are expected to maintain. This display is for the purpose of giving imposing splendour and elegance to a court, ambitious to vie with other European courts in apparent refinement and taste as well as magnificence. In our own country, where there is no such apology, there is, nevertheless, too much indulgence given to the same foolish passion for display.

Wend we with the world to-night, to some gay scene of entertainment in the middle ranks of English society. The elegant mansion is blazing in the full effulgence of gay lamps and chandeliers. Its anxious mistress takes a last survey of the splendidly decorated apartments, and then a last look at herself in a mirror before which a giantess might have arranged her paraphernalia, from top-knot to shoe-tie. The foot falls soft upon the luxurious carpet, whose flowers seem scattered fresh from Flora's munificent hand. The rich and beautiful hangings of blue damask might have been thrown by the Graces over those golden arrows; a Sybarite would have luxuriated upon the velvet-covered divan, and a sultana might covet the embroidered cushions for her harem-throne. Flowers, whose parent buds dipped their pure petals in the Nile, whose fragrance floated upon the breezes of Japan, or were wasted upon the dull sense of the Chinese, fill the air with mingled perfume. Oranges hang amid their dark leaves in exuberant profusion, tempting to the eye, but as unsatisfying to the taste, as bitter, as the "grapes of Gomorrah," presenting to the lady of the mansion no inapposite emblem. These splendid preparations were to have astonished some of her most fashionable acquaintances, who, instead of giving *eclat* to

her brilliant assembly, have pleaded "a previous engagement," and grace a rival party elsewhere. The very persons who, of all the world, she had exerted herself most to please and to win, have deserted her in this her hour of anticipated triumph. With a heavy heart she chooses the most eligible position for the reception of those accepting guests whom she felt constrained to invite, but does not feel exceedingly desirous to see.

The rooms after all, however, are filled, crammed like a drum of figs—the heat becomes intolerable—dresses are crumpled, or cannot be seen to any advantage. Conversation in any sense deserving of the name is altogether out of the question. The hostess, who has been at so much labour and cost, cannot even have a passing word with two-thirds of those under her roof; and when they crowd to the supper-room, she has in reality far less share in their entertainment—except in the expenses of it, which are entirely her own—than the landlady of the country inn where the county ball may chance to be held. What were her reflections while the entertainment progressed? what are they now that it has reached a close?

Everybody has tried to see and be seen, and neither wonder nor admire, and made their most graceful *conge*. The sound of the last carriage has died away, and the lady of the mansion retires to her own chamber. With the aid of Asmodeus, we will enter; or perhaps Mephistopheles would give more efficient aid in revealing the lady's secret communings with her own heart. "I have discharged the claims of society to their full satisfaction. How much have I promoted the happiness of our circle! I have been the means of increasing their kindly feelings towards each other—of allaying the envy and jealousy with which they have hitherto been tormented. By discussing their plans of usefulness, they have caught new ardour from the electric spark of sympathy. They will be cheered by these healthful hours of recreation for the duties of the morrow. How sweet, how refreshing, will be my conscience-satisfied sleep!" Ha! did we hear aright? Mephistopheles must have

played us false; for look at that care-worn, regretful, mortified countenance, as she lays aside her costly ornaments before the faithful mirror: such is not the expression of "perfect peace."

And you, fair reader, what are your reflections, as you rattle over the pavement on your way homeward? "I have been amused and instructed by the conversation of the evening. I was so happy to meet dear friends and pleasant acquaintances, and hold with them that kind, cordial intercourse, that makes the heart glow with benevolence and complacency. How extremely kind it was for Mrs. — to bring her friends together for an evening of unalloyed enjoyment, at such an expense of time and money! What fine taste and generous hospitality! How perfectly well she can afford it! How invigorating to body and mind is the healthful exercise of the dancing-room! How cheerfully shall I lay my head upon my pillow, with this delightful consciousness of a well-spent evening!" Has Mephistopheles played us false again?

The question is not, whether large parties are morally wrong. It would, perhaps, require a nice casuist to decide that to be wrong for two hundred, which is not wrong for twenty. Yet this is certain, that more true happiness generally results from a quiet dinner party of six or eight congenial friends, or the still less formal evening party, where the lady's needle gives a pleasant occupation that helps instead of hindering conversation; and some favourite author read aloud during some part of the evening adds to the happiness of all, and gives a key-note to the rational interchange of thought. But leaving the nice question of the utility of large parties, we would merely inquire, whether parties, large or small, usually effect the object for which they are, or ought to be, designed; namely, to promote cheerfulness, social feeling, intelligence, kindness, and healthful recreation.

Wearied with the racking toil of business, or the wear and tear of a profession, or the discord of political life, or the intense application of the scholar, men need occasionally

a rarer atmosphere for the lighter play of thought—a fresh field, where mind may be diverted awhile from those deep-worn channels through which it rushes so impetuously. They seek it in the society of friends of “the gentler sex,” where the weightier matters of life are not to be brought upon the carpet. Thus seeking refreshment and renewal of strength, they require subjects for conversation in society not altogether destitute of material for intellectual exercise; and in their companions, something better than dull inanity or flippant insipidity. Another advantage which they ought to expect from female society is, that the harsher features of their characters, and the ruggedness of their tempers, may be softened; it is neutral ground, where rival politicians may dismiss those bitter feelings and that violent animosity too often engendered by party strife; where the money-making may forget their worldliness, and the unsuccessful their disappointments.

Happily, the great majority of the women of our country still appreciate the right to move in the calm, sequestered sphere which Heaven in mercy ordained for them, far removed from the heated, murky atmosphere of politics. Beware of those who would tempt you from this sphere, as Satan tempted Eve from Eden. Do they not say to you, that you occupy an humble, subordinate station? That man denies you equality of rights—

“Why, but to awe?
Why, but to keep ye low and ignorant,
His worshippers?”

Hapless, deluded Eve, when she had fallen into irremediable ruin by these wiles, began to plume herself upon the attainment of her rights, and to reason upon the propriety of keeping to herself the “odds of knowledge in her power, without a partner!”

“And perhaps—
A thing not undesirable—some time
Superior; for, inferior, *who is free?*”

Mother of mankind! Adam’s fervent advice to thee may still apply to thine erring daughters!—

"O woman, best are all things as the will
 Of God ordained them; his creating hand
 Nothing imperfect or deficient left
 Of all that he created; much less man,
 Or aught that might his happy state secure,
 Secure from outward force; within himself
 The danger lies, yet lies within his power;
 Against his will he can receive no harm.
 But God left free the will; for what obeys
 Reason is free; and reason be made right,
 But bid her well beware, and still erect;
 Lest, by some fair-appearing good surprised,
 She dictate false, and misinform the will
 To do what God expressly hath forbid.
 Not then mistrust, but tender love, enjoins
 That I should mind thee oft; and mind thou me.
 Seek not temptation then, which to avoid
 Were better,
 Wouldst thou approve thy constancy? approve
 First thy obedience.
 For God towards thee hath done his part;—do thine."

If some men seek society for relaxation from severe mental application, there are others who consider it as only one mode of that amusement which is the occupation of their lives. These prefer that frivolity and nonsense should reign with undisputed sway in ladies' society. That in the giddy whirl, not only sober thought, but the very semblance of thought, should be annihilated. They are contented with the froth, and care not for the cream of conversation, which, in truth, is light enough; and it must be confessed, that many young ladies show a very accommodating spirit in yielding to their taste.

Because pedantry is odious, and *blue-stockings* are voted ridiculous, there is no reason why modest learning and real intelligence should be proscribed. Women often mingle in society, to escape for a while from petty cares, and merely mechanical employments, which would otherwise be so monopolizing, that by constant devotion to them they would be rendered selfish and narrow-minded. After giving up their studies, when school education is completed, they have but little leisure for gaining knowledge, while men of education find no resting-place. It is too late in the day to revive the time-worn, hackneyed dispute about the mental

equality of the sexes; let it rest in the tomb of the Capulets. In mixed society, they may meet on terms of equality; they do not come together to make invidious comparisons; they expect no admirable Crichton, nor astonishing Maria Agnesi, to contend for an intellectual prize, to be borne off in triumph.

But neither should the ultra-refinement of society destroy that individuality of character which gives zest to human life. It is this refining and polishing process, reducing all natures to a seeming resemblance to a fashionable standard, that renders society dull, vapid, and unprofitable. The whole works of creation may, by some peculiar characteristics, be ranked in classes; yet no two of any species are in all respects similar. So it is with the lords of all created things upon this well ordered earth; there are peculiarities and associations of qualities, which mark the individual character of each human being. He who comes to the warfare of life armed by his own well-tutored caution against all deceit, will never be thrown off his guard; whilst the confiding and unsuspecting, though experience may have obliged them to don the armour of prudence, will still leave crevices through which the arrows of the designing may pierce to the very heart. Upon the thorn-bush blossoms the rose in its native simplicity; cultivation may vary its size and beauty, but still it is a rose; the dahlia by its side may rival it in brilliancy, but not in delicate texture and delicious perfume. Thus modest sensibility and warmth of heart may stand in society side by side with keen wit and sparkling vivacity. The collision of different characters will bring out difference of opinion, without destroying the harmony of society. Here, as in the economy of the material universe, there is a centripetal and a centrifugal force. The man of cool temperament checks his passionate friend; the charitable repairs the evil done by the censorious; the timid and diffident are encouraged by the bold and daring; the man of persevering common sense puts into execution the plans devised by the less patient man of genius. Each should avoid the affectation of characteristics which he does

not possess. As the counteracting muscles of the arm, by acting different ways, perfect their usefulness, so these varieties of character give energy and power to society.

If all go into society as to a mental masquerade, where each is acting a studied part, how much both of utility and pleasure must be lost! We should lose the agreeable surprise arising from the discovery of a vein of golden ore, where we had only seen common clay; of striking out a latent spark of genius, which seclusion had hidden even from its possessor; of seeing the warm tear of benevolence in the earnest eye of one deemed cold and calculating. No man's self-love would permit him to view his exact counterpart with good feelings; for though we love to see our opinions reflected by our friends, who could bear to be mirrored forth by thousands to whom he was indifferent!

Preserving, then, that individuality of character which gives delightful variety to society, all should bring to it affability, good sense, good taste, and kind feeling.

The literature of the day, improvement in the arts, discoveries in science, the important events that are taking place in the world, the efforts being made for the diffusion of knowledge and religion—these, and a thousand other interesting topics, men might talk about in the society of ladies, without lowering their own minds, or elevating beyond their capacity those of their auditors, or rather colloquists; for it is assumed that here they meet on terms of perfect equality. If it be said, that by courtesy it is left for the ladies to take the lead, then they are to blame if they find no higher themes for entertainment than fashions, beauty, dress, manners, flattery, and scandal. Making large allowance for their fondness for these topics, candour must acknowledge that modesty, in many instances, and the fear of ridicule in others, deter them from bringing forward other less trifling subjects, in which they are deeply interested. Cicero says of silence—"There is not only an art, but an eloquence in it;" let, then, your silence be eloquent, whenever frivolous or unsuitable subjects are introduced; it is often the only delicate way in which you can manifest disapprobation.

Acknowledging that society has claims, and that you are to maintain kind and friendly relations with the circle to which you belong; yet neither these claims, nor your love of display, nor your fondness for amusement, should lead you to the sacrifice of personal happiness and of principle.

The frequent demands upon the purse, from young ladies who wish to make a splendid appearance in society, are often reluctantly answered by the purse-bearer, and should, if justice were heeded, not seldom be denied. While debts are unpaid, and the hire of the labourer is withheld, conscience should not let any one remain at ease and self-satisfied in magnificent apparel. The old fable of the daw in peacock's feathers might, in such a case, be admirably exemplified, were the milliner, mantua-maker, and jeweller, each to claim their own share of a fashionable belle's gay adornings. And the fine horses and splendid equipage, which a fond father, to gratify a daughter's pride, has raised by the magic wand of credit, might, if touched by the sword of justice, be transformed, like Cinderella's, into rags, mice, and a pumpkin-shell. It is urged in defence of the luxuries of the rich, that they are the support of the poor. Some political economists deny this. Be that as it may, no one can deny that the extravagancy of the reputed rich greatly increases the misery and sufferings of the poor. The pale sempstress or mantua-maker, who has toiled all day for you, goes, perhaps, like Kate Nickleby, to the home of indigence and sorrow unpaid, to weep over the woes she cannot relieve by her untiring industry; while you, fair reader, array yourself, with a light heart and gay smile, in that dress which her skill has wrought into its graceful elegance. Could you wear it cheerfully, if you knew her to be suffering for the reward of her labour? Certainly not; yet you, and thousands of others, forget that every shilling is usually wanted immediately, by those who thus earn their daily subsistence.

It may be said in self-defence, that a young lady seldom knows the extent of her father's pecuniary resources. That may be; yet, if she receive a regular allowance, she can be

certain that no one suffers directly through her ; and if not, she should never employ work-women without knowing positively, beforehand, that she can pay them as soon as their work is done. Justice should be satisfied before pride.

Benevolence must not be set aside for more vociferous but less worthy claimants. Vanity may sometimes be denied an additional flower or feather without disparagement ; fashion be boldly confronted, in a dress *un peu passe*, worn for charity's sake ; and pleasure's frown need not be dreaded, if, instead of wreathing her roses around your own brow, you sometimes extract from them the balm of consolation.

Does society claim an exorbitant share of time ? This sacrifice is often yielded as if demanded by that " necessity that knows no law." The hours spent in society are but a small proportion of the time thus yielded ; previous preparation for these hours makes a far more exorbitant demand. Tasteful embroidery and fine needlework afford pleasant occupation to young ladies ; but when employed solely for the decoration of the person, they may be treacherous monopolizers. One young lady has been known to spend two months upon the trimming to a ball dress ; and another a half-year upon an embroidered satin dress ;—patient, persevering industry, which, applied to better purposes than the gratification of vanity and selfishness, would deserve high encomium ; and, perhaps, after all this pains-taking, society would have been as well pleased without the trimming and embroidery. The choice of a dress for a single evening often costs many hours of meditation ; and distracting doubts between rival colours, many more. The toilet demands much time ; to all these, add the time spent abroad in shopping, and the time in society—they make up a large amount, leaving but a meagre modicum for home and its duties.

Fashionable morning visits. Who has not uttered her testimony against them as time-stealers, and stupid ones too ! yet who would say they can be entirely dispensed

with! Not she who hopes, during her round of visits, to leave more cards than personally expressed compliments; nor even she who would gladly make more cordial and less unmeaning visits.

Do you sacrifice health to the claims of society? We have, in a former chapter, alluded to the danger of exposure after standing or dancing for hours in heated rooms. If all the young and lovely who have thus been hurried to their graves could be summoned to bear testimony to those who still expose themselves in this manner, the cloud of witnesses would strike terror and dismay to many a gay and thoughtless heart. Dancing may be a healthsome and delightful exercise at home, or where there is ample verge and pure free air; but in the cramped confines of the drawing-room and the crowded ball-room, where the exhausted atmosphere renders respiration difficult and laborious, such exercise cannot be beneficial. No wonder the Chinese, on seeing the efforts of English gentlemen and ladies under these circumstances, exclaimed with self-exultation—"We hire our dancing done in China."

Late hours at night, continued for a length of time, give a sallowness to the complexion, indicating that health is on the wane. The restorative virtues of morning air seldom lend their aid to freshen the departing bloom; the fatigue and exhaustion of a night of gaiety are frequent preludes to a morning headache and a train of attendant evil sprites.

"Canst thou forego the pure ethereal soul,
In each fine sense so exquisitely keen,
On the dull couch of luxury to loll,
Stung with disease, and stupified with spleen?"

"O, how canst thou renounce the boundless store
Of charms which Nature to her votary yields!
The warbling woodland, the resounding shore,
The pomp of groves, and garniture of fields;
All that the genial ray of morning gilds,
And all that echoes to the song of even,
All that the mountain's sheltering bosom shields,
And all the dread magnificence of Heaven!
O, how canst thou renounce, and hope to be forgiven?"

And cheerfulness too; are not her smiles often sacrificed!

The sadness arising from physical suffering is not the only sadness induced by devotion to the claims of society. Disappointment and disgust often take the place of anticipated enjoyment;—

“The heart distrusts asks, if this be joy?”

Some imprudent word uttered, some unintentional severity, or some supercilious alight, frequently embitters the recollection of an evening. There is, too, a heartlessness, a coldness, in society, that chills the ardour of a warm, ingenuous nature, and sends back the current of kindness, until it is finally frozen to apathy. The severe scrutiny and unsparing criticism bestowed upon a novice are often painfully endured: blushing at the consciousness of her own awkwardness, and vexed to be thus subjected to ill-natured remark, she might exclaim, with one of Miss More's pastoral damsels in the “Search after Happiness,”—

“Are these the beings called polite?

Is this the world of which we want a sight?”

Domestic happiness is sometimes sacrificed. A happy fireside is forsaken for the mingled crowd. Sacrifice as it is, it must sometimes be made; but not too frequently, lest the taste should become vitiated, and the quiet enjoyment of home no longer be yours. Habits thus formed will not readily yield to a new situation and new circumstances. Woe to the man whose wife is thoroughly imbued with the spirit of party-going and party-giving! His house can scarcely be called his own; in it, he is a mere moveable, that must submit, like other furniture, to be tossed to and fro for the accommodation of society. This extreme fondness for display at home and abroad, in gay, extravagant wives—this entire want of home-feeling and quiet contentment—have driven a fearful number of husbands to the theatre and even to the gambling-table; to dissipation and ruin.

When the winter campaign is finished, travelling and watering-places take all the world of fashion from home. The sacrifice of comfort here is immense. Alas for our

country—her old-fashioned firesides—her rural pleasures—her comfortable homes! If those families who during the summer months leave town, would but expend the same amount of money now spent in travelling, year after year, upon the purchase of a neat country-house, with a few surrounding acres, how greatly would their comfort and usefulness be increased! It delights the imagination to revel amid the quiet little Edens that might thus be created by the hand of taste in every “bosky dell,” and by the side of the clear rivers of our beautiful country. A taste for horticulture and the planting of trees, among the gentlemen, would harmonize with the ladies’ taste for flowers, grottoes, and fountains. We are not so Utopian in our day-dreams, as to believe this would quite bring back the Golden Age; but we do believe that the sterling worth and domestic enjoyment of other days would be renewed. And the claims of society, how would they be thus answered? Much better than they now are by the itinerating mania that has seized all ranks. Those families whose places of residence are permanently in the country, would be better contented to remain there, if citizens and strangers were half the year their neighbours. Social intercourse between them might be placed upon a rational and agreeable footing; but it is quite preposterous thus to speculate upon what might be if—and if—and he who dares to attack the usages of society may chance to meet with as cordial a reception as Spenser’s man, Talus, who went about the world with his iron flail.

And is there no sacrifice of principle ever made to keep on good terms with society? Do you never meet there the dissipated, the vicious, from whom your whole soul revolts? But you say, even these must not be given up entirely. Certainly not, if you can do them any good. The influence exerted upon them by ladies’ society should be a strong, decided moral influence. Yet how can this be if you may not show, even by a look, that you disapprove of their characters? Until society has a sanative power through our instrumentality, it will not retard their progress in

dissipation. A fearful responsibility thus devolves upon ladies who are leaders in society. If things good and holy are allowed to be ridiculed there; if *the parsons, the righteous, the sanctimonious*, as the ministers of religion and its professors are jeeringly termed, are made the target for their light missiles; if they countenance those who "look upon the wine when it is red," and quaff it while it sparkles, until reason vanishes and folly reigns, what happy influence do you exert? You lend the most powerful aid in accelerating their downward course. But it need not be, and it is not always thus. We hope and believe better things of you, kind readers, in this day of more enlightened morality and quickened sensibility. Be it your noble privilege to elevate still higher the standard of morals. God grant you a clear perception of what is due to society, and the power to benefit it, without the *sacrifice of economy, time, health, cheerfulness, domestic happiness, and religious principles!*

CHAPTER XXVII.

READING THE SACRED SCRIPTURES.

"We mourn not that prophetic skill
Is found on earth no more;
Enough for us to trace thy will
In Scriptures' sacred lore."

HEBER.

Of all knowledge, the most important to man is that which unaided reason seeks in vain, and philosophy, in her boldest flights, could never reach—the knowledge of the character of the Supreme Being, and our relations to him. Without divine revelation, not a ray of light illumines the past or gilds the dark future: man stands alone, a mournful mystery to himself: but, blessed be God, in the moral as in the natural world, he said, "Let there be light, and there was light."

The Old Testament reveals the Creator—his wisdom and goodness in calling forth from chaos this beautiful world, and furnishing it with magnificent richness for a habitation for man; the creation of man in the image of his Maker; his departure from the law of holiness, and the direful consequences of his guilt; proclaims pardon to the penitent, and restoration to the Divine favour through a Redeemer. It tells of the fearful increase of sin and horrible depravity, by a monstrous race polluting the earth, until at length the righteous judgment of God sweeps them from the face of it by a universal deluge; while praise for saving mercy ascends from one only family, who float securely upon the world of waters. It proclaims a covenant between God and one whom he condescends to style his friend, and his special love and favour to his descendants, to whom he promulgates the moral law; confirming, by miracles, his authority, and by prophets keeping alive, from generation to generation, the hope of that Saviour “in whom all the families of the earth should be blessed.” Through its sacred pages are profusely scattered the sweetest, purest strains of poetic fancy, and the sublimest effusions of heaven-born eloquence. Its imperishable literature has inspired the noblest efforts of human genius. What other book contains such astonishing, such inexhaustible materials for thought and investigation? Bring to it all the treasures of knowledge to aid in its explanation and illustration. Profane history, ancient and modern, will throw light upon the prophecies; Eastern travels offer striking illustrations from existing customs and manners, and delineate Scripture geography with satisfactory precision. Search and compare Scripture with Scripture. Where there is obscurity that you cannot penetrate, resort to critical commentators; and where there are difficulties that you cannot solve, have recourse to the pious and the learned; but at the same time use the reason which God has given you for this noble purpose—the deep, daily study of his Holy Word.

The New Testament is the record of the long-promised

Bedeemer's miraculous birth and spotless life; his death, resurrection, and ascension to heaven; the efforts of the witnesses of these events to make them known to the world, and the success of their labours; their letters to the converts to Christianity, explaining its doctrines and enforcing its duties; ending with a sublime apocalypse of the thrilling scenes that shall precede the dissolution of the world, the terrors of the judgment-day, and a heart-cheering vision of the mansions of blessedness.

We should each know for ourselves, the evidences on which belief in these stupendous truths is founded.

It is not designed to enter here at length into the evidences of Christianity. Wilberforce, Chalmers, Erskine, and Paley, on this subject, are earnestly recommended to your serious and attentive perusal.

The New Testament depends upon the evidence of testimony, and of internal evidence, or its adaptation to the wants and condition of man.

Upon the strength of the first argument, our belief mainly rests. The writers of the New Testament—were they intelligent, honest, and true witnesses? They were plain, sensible men, who had no other motive in writing, but to make known truths which would expose them to contempt, persecution, and death, in obedience to the command of their crucified Master; they exhibited the credentials of their authority as Christ's witnesses, by working miracles, which were seen and known by thousands of their fellow-men, in full possession of their senses and their reason. The knowledge of these events has been transmitted to the present time, in the same way that other historical truths have been; namely, by written testimony. No one ever doubted that there was such a man as Alexander the Great, or that he had such a friend as Parmenio, or that he conquered the Persian monarch Darius. We believe these things as firmly as if they had occurred in some distant land in our own day; the length of time that has elapsed does not invalidate the testimony of the historian. No history in the world is so well supported by testimony as the

history of Jesus Christ: for this very reason, that there never has been a time when there were not parties interested in proving it false, if they could have done so. A number of eye-witnesses have given their separate but concordant narrations of the same events, and the severe scrutiny that has been exercised upon them has only laid open the immoveable basis upon which they rest.

These brief hints have been given, merely to lead your minds to a thorough investigation of this subject.

The second argument, namely, whether the truths revealed are adapted to the condition of man, comes home to every heart. Look into your own; are its yearnings after happiness satisfied with anything that earth affords? What shall purify and elevate its affections? What moral power do you possess to escape from wretchedness? What human philosophy will afford consolation in death, and hope of a blissful immortality? The Bible! The Bible alone reveals the mystery of man's being, his fallen, sinful state, and the means of restoration; points out the path of duty, and opens wide the golden gates of immortality. And for the evidence of the truth and the divine origin of Christianity, are there none within the circle of your acquaintance, whose lives are a constant example of the power of its divine influence on their hearts? The consistent lives of Christian men is the best and most unanswerable evidence of the divine origin of Christianity. Nor, let it be remembered by each of you, is there a greater stumbling-block in the way of unbelievers, than the inconsistencies of professing Christians. The Bible, then, my young friends, must be your text-book of duty, your guide in self-education; and a simple faith in the divine Redeemer the ground of all your hopes for time and for eternity. Life and immortality have been brought to light by the gospel. But you must come to the reading of it with one petition, uttered with the earnestness of the last cry of a drowning man, "God be merciful to me a sinner!" You must flee to Christ as the only refuge of the lost, as well as the only remedy for sin. Then the same spirit which inspired "holy men

of old" to write its solemn truths, will render it to you "a pillar of fire by day and a pillar of cloud by night," to guide you through life's wilderness to the promised land.

In this age of sectarianism and heresy, cling closely to the Bible. Consider it more honourable than any sectarian appellation, to be called "a Bible Christian." In the stillness and solitude of evening, before you throw yourself upon the protecting care of Divine Love, read its glorious promises. By the rosy light of morning, study its holy precepts, to regulate your thoughts, animate your love, and fortify your heart against temptation. Imbibe its principles, so that they shall run through the whole tenor of your conduct—form the very warp upon which your life is woven. You need not fear that you will become too well acquainted with the blessed book. To adopt the eloquent language of another, "If all the minds now on earth could be concentrated into one, and that one applied the whole of its stupendous energies to the study of this single book, it would never apprehend its doctrines in all their divine purity; its promises in their overpowering fulness; its precepts in their searching extent; even that glorious mind, sufficient to exhaust the universe, would only discover that the Scriptures were inexhaustible."

CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE STANDARD OF CHRISTIAN CHARACTER.

"At kind distance still
Perfection stands, like happiness,
To tempt eternal chase."

WHEN Corregio first saw the paintings of Raphael, his heart throbbed with exultation, and he exclaimed, "I, too, am a painter!" An artist of our own country was once standing, with folded arms, gazing with intense delight upon a beautiful picture; the question was asked, "Do you ever expect

to equal that!" He turned quickly, his dark eye flashing with the enthusiasm of genius, and replied, "My aim is perfection." Would such an one be daunted by the ridicule of those who have no taste for his art, or his ardour cooled by the sober advice of the utilitarian, who declares it to be an unprofitable employment of time? They no more retard his progress, than the "dewy cobwebs on the morning grass" retard the journey of the early traveller. The painter's ardour, his devotedness, his perseverance, call forth unbounded praise from all lovers of the art; they know that such concentration of power, such unity of purpose, will produce surpassing excellence. All the world acknowledge that "it is good to be zealously affected in a good cause," excepting only the best of all causes—the cause of religion.

Among those who are professedly Christians, the diversity of character is immense. The heart may be right, where there are errors in judgment; and the understanding may be enlightened and convinced, while the heart remains untouched. It is, nevertheless, to this "cloud of witnesses" that the young look for example.

The poetical student of the Bible admires the beauty and the thrilling grandeur of many parts of it. Its wonderful truths exercise the intellect, and give unbounded scope to the imagination. His taste is charmed with the bold rhetorical figures and the beautiful imagery with which it abounds. He is not insensible, perhaps, to the noble examples of moral sublimity there exhibited. He admires, too, the splendid actions of illustrious men of every age and country—"the lofty deeds and daring high" of the patriot, the philanthropy of a Howard or a Wilberforce, the dauntless courage of a Luther and a Knox—but with the same kind of admiration that might be bestowed upon equal energy and intellectual power directed to entirely different purposes. It is the admiration of greatness of character, of a grandeur and power which belong, in a superior degree, to Milton's Satan and Goëthe's Mephistopheles. It is possible he may sometimes admire what is called the beauty of virtue, but it is not "the beauty of

holiness." To him there is nothing picturesque, nothing interesting, in the daily life of the serious, humble, unobtrusive Christian; nothing to excite the imagination, or charm the overwrought feelings, in such an one's self-denying duties. If such a Christian, however, were brought to the stake, and endured, with unyielding fortitude, the agonies of martyrdom, then he would become worthy of admiration. Or it is possible that the magnanimity or the moral courage of a Christian might strike the poetical religionist with awe, as Milton's Satan, at the grave rebuke of the cherub Zephon, struck with his angel countenance, "severe in youthful beauty,"

"Felt how awful goodness is, and saw
Virtue in her shape how lovely."

Rousseau could admire the beauty and moral grandeur of Christianity, and could even pen an eloquent encomium upon that Saviour whose divinity he denied, and whose precepts he daringly violated. He says: "The majesty of the Scriptures strikes me with astonishment, and the sanctity of the gospel addresses itself to my heart. Look at the volumes of the philosophers! With all their pomp, how contemptible do they appear in comparison to this! Is it possible that a book, at once so simple and so sublime, can be the work of man! Can he, who himself is the subject of its history, be a mere man! Was his the tone of an enthusiast or an ambitious sectary! What sweetness! What purity in his manners! What an affecting gracefulness in his instructions! What sublimity in his maxims! What profound wisdom in his discourses! What presence of mind! What sagacity and propriety in his answers! How great the command over his passions! Where is the man, where the philosopher, who could so live, suffer, and die, without weakness and without ostentation?"

Madame de Staël, in her works, discovers the same admiration, the same enthusiasm, for the grand and the beautiful in religion; while it is not uncharitable to believe that she never felt its power.

The worshipper of nature may be called a poetical religionist, and even the glorious achievements of art call forth, in such a mind, similar emotion. But this is not religion—unless adoring love of the Creator mingle with admiration of his works. Another gifted being, whose whole life was a practical demonstration of his impiety, could worship nature with an enthusiast's zeal.

"The stars are forth, the moon above the tops
Of the snow-shining mountains. Beautiful!
I linger yet with Nature, for the night
Hath been to me a more familiar face
Than that of man; and in her starry shade
Of dim and solitary loveliness,
I learned the language of another world.
I do remember me, that in my youth,
When I was wandering upon such a night,
I stood within the Coliseum's walls,
'Midst the chief relics of almighty Rome.

"And thou didst shine, thou rolling moon, upon
All this, and cast a wide and tender light,
Which softened down the hear austerity
Of rugged desolation, and filled up,
As 'twere anew, the gaps of centuries;
Leaving that beautiful which still was so,
And making that which was not, till the place
Became religion, and the heart ran o'er
With silent worship of the great of old."

To the young, such a religion often appears like an angel of light; while true religion, robed in the garb of humility, with the tears of penitence upon her cheek, meekly bearing the cross, and trampling under foot the glittering gold and dazzling gauds of earth, has no "comeliness," and is "despised and rejected."

Nearly allied to the poetical, is the sentimental religionist. Sentimentalism, on any subject, is to be deprecated; but where it is substituted for genuine Christian sensibility, it is deplorable. A young lady may be melted to tears by the eloquence of a favourite preacher. Music has the same effect. The sorrows and sufferings of her fellow-beings call forth sighs innumerable, and touching expressions of sympathy and commiseration; but her feelings are too delicate,

her sensibility too exquisite, to allow her to come in contact with actual misery. The luxury of emotion in which she indulges is not willingly changed for the performance of the ordinary duties of life. It is nunlike and saintlike to look pensive, and have the eyes surcharged with unshed tears; but are they caused by broken-heartedness for sin? Does she not more frequently weep over the weakness and degradation of human nature than over its sinfulness? The purity, the loveliness of religion, she can eloquently describe; while, perhaps, the warfare within, and that spirituality that this religion requires, are utterly incomprehensible. By this morbid sensibility, the *tone* of religious character is destroyed. It softens, but it also enervates and saddens; it "imparts poison in an odour; slays with a jewelled scimitar."

"An ardent spirit dwells with Christian love,
The eagle's vigour in the pitying dove;
'Tis not enough that we with sorrow sigh,
That we the wants of pleading man supply,
That we in sympathy with sufferers feel,
Nor hear a grief without a wish to heal;
Not these suffice: to sickness, pain, and woe,
The Christian spirit loves with aid to go,
Will not be sought, waits not for want to plead,
But seeks the duty—nay, prevents the need—
Her utmost aid to every ill applies,
And plans relief for coming miseries."

Unlike the poetical and the sentimental, the harsh, severe religionist holds no communion with nature. He fears to look upon the beauties profusely showered upon field and forest, mountain and vale. He seldom lifts his eyes to "the moon walking in brightness," or yields to "the sweet influences of the Pleiades," lest his admiration of the heavenly host should touch that sensibility which he thinks it duty to repress. He forgets that the same hand which wrote the law amid the thunders of Sinai, lighted up those glorious orbs, and tinted with its beautiful hues even the delicate flower that he tramples beneath his feet. When this magnificent world was finished, the Almighty Creator pronounced it "very good;" and in his holy Word calls upon all men to

"praise his wondrous works." Moses, David, Solomon, and the prophets, looked upon nature with a loving and poetic eye, and found types of things spiritual in things material. Our blessed Saviour himself drew his similes and illustrations from the natural objects around him, and a garden was his chosen place for retirement and holy meditation.

The Christian of cultivated mind and refined taste may have a keen and delicate perception of beauty in all its infinite variety. "He looks with admiration on the fair, the rich, the magnificent, in architecture; on the master-sketch, the colouring, the light and shade, of the painter; on the transforming power and decorative taste of the sculptor. He gazes with a *child's rejoicing* on the bud and the blossom, on the flower and the leaf; on the gaudy butterfly, the glittering scales of the fish, and the dazzling plumage of the bird. He gazes with a poet's feeling, if not with a poet's eye, on the cheerful landscape of morning, and the pensive scenery of evening; on the beauty and serenity of the lake and the woodland. He gazes with a religious awe upon the deep silence of the heavens, and the calm majesty of the ocean; on the gloom of the forest, on the fury of the storm, on the savage rush of the cataract, and the solemn grandeur of the mountain." But not alone in the magnificence of nature does the Christian rejoice; the Almighty Creator has flung abroad over the wide earth tokens of his wisdom and goodness, which cause the pious heart to glow with admiration and love. This is beautifully exemplified in a simple description of a passage round a dangerous precipice. The traveller says: "The river in the valley below seemed, in the distance, like a white silken thread; and the bare, barren, perpendicular rock was frightful to behold. 'Be steady,' said the guide who went before me, 'and keep your eye on the rock.' I went on, scarcely daring to draw my breath, grasping with my hands every projection that I could lay hold of, for the shelf on which we stood was only a few inches wide. I asked the guide if we had almost passed the danger, but he was silent as the grave; not a word escaped him. A slip, a false step, a

breath of air, would almost have been sufficient to have plunged me headlong down the fearful steep. Now and then our feet displaced the small, loose pieces of granite which lay on the ledge we stood upon; they fell over, but we never heard them strike against the rock, it was so perpendicular. I felt that my life was held in a balance, and that none but the High and Holy One could preserve me. At last we came to a spot where the path was much broader, so that we could all stand comfortably upon it; and here we paused a minute, that I might recover a little from the fear I had endured. In this place I observed a small, beautiful, dazzling blossom, on a plant which grew from a crevice in the rock. It was a lovely little flower, and gave me wondrous comfort, for it told me that God was on the edge of the precipice with us. The flower was his divine workmanship; so I plucked it and placed it in my bosom.

'In that eventful hour
My heart had failed with fear;
But, gazing on the lovely flower,
I felt that God was near.'"

This deep consciousness of the benevolence of the Supreme Being renders the beautiful in his works ever emblematic of himself. Henry Martin could rejoice in his Almighty perfections, even when "a single leaf" was the only visible type; and the world of beauty, that lies beyond the ken of unaided sight, revealed by the microscope, fills the mind of the pious contemplatist with adoring wonder. Earth sends up her perpetual hymn of praise to the Creator, and dull and gross must be that heart in which there is no response. Strong, earnest faith in the invisible, will not degrade things visible; to those who "dwell in the house of the Lord, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple," a single dew-drop may be a memento of his wisdom, benevolence, and mercy.

Of another class of religionists, whom Miss More calls the "phraseologists," she says: "These are assiduous hearers, but indifferent doers; very valiant talkers for the truth,

but remiss workers. They are more addicted to hear sermons than to profit by them. They always exhibit in their conversation the idiom of a party, and are apt to suspect the sincerity of those whose higher breeding and more correct habits discover a better taste. The language of these technical Christians indisposes persons of refinement, who have not had the advantage of seeing religion under a more engaging form, to serious piety, by leading them to make a most unjust association between religion and bad taste. With them, words are not only the *signs* of things, but things themselves."

These "phraseologists" would have all Christians, however differing in natural, individual character, come under their flattening machine. The sanguine must become phlegmatic, the cheerful must wear a sad countenance, the impulsive must never act without cold calculation, the young must have the sobriety of the aged, and the heart beating warm with generous sensibility must be cooled down to the zero of their thermometer. They deal much in denunciation and condemnation, and spend their strength in endeavouring to proselyte to their own sect, but do not like to commune with their own hearts and be still.

Another class, differing but little from the last, would keep the mind in a continual state of excitement. Fervour, with them, is the alpha and the omega. Devotional retirement, solemn self-examination, do not sufficiently excite their zeal; they must keep it up to a white heat by the sympathy of others. They are in danger of sometimes mistaking mere animal feeling for religious fervency. They are in danger of saying, in action if not in words, to those who are more calm, and would have everything done "decently and in order"—"Stand by, for I am holier than thou." They may be following the *ignis-fatuus* of their own heated imaginations, instead of the leadings of an unerring guide. They may, by this over-excitement of feeling, envelope in perpetual mist that strait and narrow path which they sincerely wish to pursue.

Very different from these zealots, are the cool moralists.

They are extremely careful not "to be righteous overmuch." They have a fearful dread of enthusiasm. They keep on good terms with the world, by complying with most of its customs, and practically acknowledge the wisdom of its maxims. The timid sailor boy, who for the first time climbs to the top of the mast, keeps his eye downward; he dare not "look up aloft." These moralists, with their eyes fixed upon the earth, can they go "onward and upward, and true to the line?"

Dear reader, are you "bending a pinion for the deeper sky?" Look to Him who said, "Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly of heart." Christ is the only perfect standard of human character. Many bright examples of the beauty of holiness you may meet to cheer you on your heavenward course; and they will grow brighter and brighter as they increase in their likeness to this perfect standard. Many you will find, who bear his divine lineaments but imperfectly; we may mourn over their imperfections, but still more over our own. Though weak, erring, sinful, and conscious of it all, still your aim must be perfection. That "faith, which is the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen," by uniting you to Christ, will give you a blessed hope of forgiveness through his merits and blood-bought atonement; but love for that character which was holy, harmless, and undefiled, will lead you to imitation. "Whatsoever things are pure, lovely, and of good report," will then adorn your Christian character. It is not enough to enlist under the banners of the cross. The Captain of your salvation must have your entire allegiance; you must put on the whole panoply of faith for the conflict that awaits you. The perfect soldier must go through a course of severe discipline; he must never slumber at his post; he must never communicate with the enemy; his weapons must be untarnished, bright, and ever within his reach. Above all, he must have no will but the will of his commander; his obedience must be perfect. The Christian warfare is chiefly within. You may have enemies without, who assail you with ridicule or with false reasoning, but the

kingdom of heaven is to be built up in your own heart, and there are your worst enemies. If no traitors lurk within, you may defy the puny weapons that are hurled by the outer foes. The ridicule of the thoughtless, the gay, the dissipated—dare to look it in the face, and its terrors, like those of a painted mask, will vanish. Do you shrink abashed from their commonplace taunting? They tell you “there is no reason for being so starched and prim.” That “you make yourself very disagreeable by being so rigid.” “Religion should not make you gloomy.” “There is no use in making so much parade about it.” If you are intimidated by such attacks, you will lose ground, which it will be very difficult to regain. Retreat not an inch. It is your duty to make religion as engaging as possible; to be kind, to be courteous, to be gentle, to be forbearing; at the same time, to be courageous, to be firm.

Think not that the pure and holy example of Jesus Christ is too exalted for your imitation. One object of his divine mission was to exhibit the capabilities of human nature for moral excellence, and the loveliness and purity of human affections unsullied by sinfulness.

His character, in some of its most striking traits for imitation, has been beautifully delineated by an elegant female writer, in the following language:—

“In the character of our Saviour, the mind and the heart rest satisfied; the more it is studied, the more holy and beautiful it becomes. Does the mind ask for submission? Seek it in his childhood, while he was subject to his parents: For youthful dignity? See him standing in the midst of the temple, sublime in youth and power, reasoning with the doctors and lawyers, with a wisdom which astonished even those who questioned him on subjects which had been to them the study of a lifetime. Does it ask for humility and forbearance? Find him washing his disciples’ feet, and sitting at the same board with publicans and sinners: For true and gentle charity? Listen to his voice when he says to the sinful woman, ‘Woman, where are thine accusers? Go in peace, and sin no more.’ Does it ask a heart full of gentle and

domestic sympathy! Follow him to the grave of Lazarus, or to the bier of the widow's son: For benevolence! Let the mind dwell for a moment on the cleansed leper, on the blind restored to sight, and on that heart-stirring scene, where he stood in the midst of the multitude, while the sick man was let down through the roof, that he might heal him: For firmness! Go to the wilderness, where the Son of God fasted and was sorely tempted forty days and forty nights: For energy! Witness it in the overthrowing of the money-tables, while those who had desecrated the temple were cast forth from the place they had polluted: For wisdom! Read it in every act of his life, and in every line of his sermon on the mount: For prudence! See it in his answer given to the chief priests, when they brought him the tribute money: For patience, forgiveness, and all the gentle attributes that form the Christian character in its perfection! Follow him to the garden; witness his prayer and his agony of spirit; dwell on his patient and gentle speech when he returned from that scene of pain, and found even his disciples asleep; reflect on his meekness and forbearance when the traitor's lip was on his cheek; on the hand so readily extended to heal the ear of the maimed soldier. Go with him to the place of trial, and to that last fearful scene which caused the grave to give up its dead, and the solid earth to tremble beneath the footsteps of his persecutors. Dwell upon his life, and upon every separate act of his life, and the soul must become imbued with a sense of its truth, beauty, and holiness."

Happy Martha and Mary, to be allowed the blessed privilege of receiving such a guest! Where is the austerity that piety sometimes assumes at the fireside! Where the Pharisaic severity that says, "I thank Thee that I am not as other men are," while mingling in the social circle! Love and tenderness beam from his countenance, as he encourages the humble Mary to sit at his feet; and even in his reproof to the bustling Martha, there is no unkindness; he would relieve her from being "cumbered with much serving." This glorious guest you may still welcome to your

hearts, and in the attitude of an humble, earnest, docile learner, study his perfect character, until your own shall be transmuted, by a divine alchemy, to a complete resemblance.

CHAPTER XXIX.

CHRISTIAN DUTY.—CHEERFULNESS.

"Sunbeam of summer! O, what is like thee?
Hope of the wilderness—joy of the sea!
One thing is like thee, to mortals given—
The faith, touching all things with hues of heaven."

It is a common saying, that youth has few trials; and so it may appear to those persons, who, amid the cares and turmoil of after life, look back upon this comparatively tranquil period. Yet how many of the young are ready to exclaim, in bitterness of heart, "If this be the happiest portion of existence, would that I could die!" Can we expect uniform cheerfulness in those who, with keen sensibilities, unsupported by the strength and fortitude of maturer years, and devoid of religious principle, are discovering each day more and more of the trials of life? The thoughtless, in the pride of health and spirits, excited by gay visions of future pleasure, may pass many a merry hour; but their joy is as different from real cheerfulness, as the music of a ball-room from "the minstrelsy of leaf and bird." Reflective and feeling minds must suffer from sympathy, experience, or anticipation.

Kind parents seek to conceal from an idolized child the sorrow that is preying on their hearts, and thank Heaven that, shielded from trials like theirs, she basks in the sunshine of happiness. But does not the quick eye of the affectionate daughter perceive the least shadow that rests on faces so dear? Yet she is aware that to believe her a

participator would add to their pain, and therefore appears as unconscious as they would wish her in reality to be. As their footsteps die away, how fades that bright smile that afforded them such pure pleasure, while her busy mind hurries over all possible sources of their distress, and perhaps fastens on a cause greater than the true one. Day after day, she watches each shade of expression on their countenances; and a frown on her father's brow, or pensiveness in her mother's eye, adds to the heaviness of her heart, from her incapability to afford comfort or relief.

Or, it may be, health has been refused to some dear member of the family circle. Who feels more keenly for the sufferings of the poor invalid, than the tender-hearted sister? Is it nothing to watch the bodily anguish of those we love—to know that the happiness of all who are nearest and dearest to us is bound up in one frail life, and then mark the wasting form and failing strength?

If sympathy may thus be the cause of sorrow, experience must teach even the young many a bitter lesson. Various clad, the skeleton still dwells in every mansion. The unworthiness of those whom nature teaches us to cherish with untiring affection, is a source of incalculable misery. This sorrow asks not pity from the world, and may be hid beneath forced spirits and a gay smile, or betray itself in the careworn cheek and sunken eye. While sin reigns, this spring of unhappiness will exist, and religion only can remove its bitterness.

The unsuspecting innocence of youth often lays itself open to calumny, and many, wounded by injustice, for which they were unprepared, early have the seeds of misanthropy implanted in their hearts. And evil passions in their own hearts assault the young with a thousand temptations. If these are submitted to, misery must ensue; if not, the struggle will be obstinate and painful. To form good habits is more difficult than to maintain them, and this should be the task of the young.

But there is one trial common to all. Death is in the world. This thought is enough to scatter the roses from

the most blooming cheek, and dim the brightest eye. The first loss of a near friend is an era in life. It seems to awaken us from the dream we had so long indulged—to open to our view the realities of the unseen world. A tie is formed between us and the Invisible, and now a familiar form appears to us among the unknown ones of that spirit-land. The heart can hardly believe that the friend on whom it had lavished such affection, with whom all its plans of bliss for life were blended, is indeed removed, and shrinks back from forming any bond which can be so suddenly, so entirely annulled. It had given its affection with a fulness and confidence, unlike the trembling insecurity of those whom years have reft of many dear ones; and this confidence has been completely destroyed. Then first is realized the truth, that the lost cannot return to us—that we must go to them. Too often this bright world is then viewed, not as a sphere where we have allotted duties to perform, but a dreary void, where they are not; and we look up to heaven with delight, not because it is our Father's mansion, but because they are there. Happy are those who have learnt from their first affliction to set their heart on things above!

Anticipated trials are a class of troubles which meet with little sympathy, but must often cloud the brow of the thoughtful and imaginative. The propensity to look forward is natural, and is, in our lighter moments, a source of pleasure; but there are times when the dark side of the picture will present itself. Even with the flush of delight, when we anticipate the acquisition of some long-desired object, blends the idea of melancholy changes that must occur ere our wishes are fulfilled. If our own lives are spared to any length, we must see the decay, if not the death, of our best friends. For the moment, the grief at such calamities is ours, without the strength to sustain it which mercifully accompanies real trials. The first gray hairs that steal around the brow we venerate, carry a chill to the heart; for they remind us, that, when age has set its seal upon that brow, the strong mind we revered may

be broken down, and the firm tread changed for the tottering step of infancy. O, who can anticipate without emotion the helpless second childhood of the honoured and loved! But we must sustain the departure, as well as the decay, of many of these dear ones. How fraught with wretchedness is this idea! It seems, indeed, "easier to die for those we love, than to live without their vanished light," and we cannot believe a ray of joy will fall upon us when these stars are set.

To a woman, the view of the future must be a source of deep anxiety. The uncertainty where her home will be, is more trying, because her greatest happiness or misery will centre within that home. How must she, the timid and retiring, shrink from the idea, that a time may come when she must stand alone and unprotected, a solitary woman, a forsaken wife, or a desolate widow. The possibility of such an event steals upon those who, to all outward appearances, have the greatest prospect of happiness.

"O prophet heart! thy grief, thy power,
To all deep souls belong—
The shadow in the musing hour,
The wail in mirthful song."

Such are some of the trials to which the young of our sex may be subjected, even in the bosom of their own kind families. To those arising from misplaced or hopeless affection, we will not advert. They who have felt them know their bitterness; and may those who have not long remain in ignorance! A thousand little perplexities and contrarieties are common to all, and of daily occurrence. Though small in themselves, by their frequency they may injure the temper and impair the happiness.

Yet, after this terrible array of possible and probable trials, we would assert that uniform cheerfulness is imperatively a Christian duty. The worldling may turn away from trouble; the philosopher look upon it with calmness; but the Christian only can smile upon it. Turn now to your blessings and privileges, and see how far they outnumber privations and sorrows. Nay, were your lot all darkness, with no ray

of hope for this life, the possibility of attaining immortal happiness were enough to fill your heart with gratitude. How have you ever deserved the kindness that has reared you, made you capable of enjoyment, and surrounded you with blessings? Do you not fear, if in the midst of these you indulge in repining, something may be taken from you, whose loss will make all you have ever suffered before seem as nothing? You acknowledge, perhaps, the claims of gratitude, and desire to fulfil them, but cannot maintain your composure when the pressure of trouble is upon you. It will require great effort to attain that even tenor of mind; but still it is possible. Many suppose that persons of naturally excitable dispositions can easily preserve uniform cheerfulness; but this is far from the truth, for they have constantly the double task of guarding themselves from elevation or depression of spirits. There is continual danger that they will incur the charge of inconsistency, by the appearance of levity or thoughtless mirth. But such should not despair; for if they can properly regulate their unruly spirits, they will become an honour to the cause of religion, and a blessing to those around them.

Cheerfulness may be essentially promoted by the cultivation of a firm trust in the providence of God, active benevolence, and a constant sense of the realities of the world to come.

All evils, excepting those attendant on our own sins, whether coming through the instrumentality of our fellow-beings, or what are called the chances of life, are inflicted by the hand of God. Let us bear this constantly in mind, with his assurance that all things work together for good to those who love him. If it be ascertained that we are of those who love him, we have no reason to fear, whatever they may be, that our trials will result in anything but our best good. Your cheerfulness, then, should be founded on the belief that you are one of that number, to whom the Father of all has vouchsafed so many promises of his care and protection. It is sometimes difficult to realize that the most trivial events are ordained by the Omnipotent; yet he often brings from

them the most important results. Some slight occurrence will suggest to our minds a thought followed by a train of others, producing a material change in our conduct. Trace in your lives and your hearts the steps by which you have been benefited, and you will see that what at the time seemed to be trials have proved blessings. With the firm persuasion that every affliction is intended for some beneficent end, study, as it were, the purposes of God, and see how you can aid in rendering his chastening useful to yourself. Is a wish denied? Think what evils might have resulted had it been granted. Are those who are nearly connected with you unworthy of respect, and the inflictors of continual pain? Here is a special call upon you to let your light shine, to exercise kindness and forbearance, to avoid those faults which produce such misery, and to place your affections more strongly on that Friend who knew no sin. Do not seek to forget or veil from yourself the extent of your trials. Nothing can produce a more unhappy frame of mind than that caused by turning away from an evil, yet carrying the consciousness of its existence, like a load upon the heart. View, then, your situation in all its bearings, and school yourself with divine assistance, till you can exclaim, with deep sincerity, "Thy will be done!"

From all anticipations of future suffering, perfect faith alone can secure us. How often in the Bible we are exhorted to refrain from anxiety as to what may befall us, and encouraged to cast all our care upon the Lord! If you have consecrated yourself to Him, you have placed yourself entirely at his disposal—do you fear that your confidence has been misplaced? Many of the evils you dread will never happen; and if they do, your Almighty Father has promised, that "as your day is, so shall your strength be." The fear of death may have obtained dominion over you, but it may be conquered by fixing your eyes on Him who will guide you through the dark valley himself has trod, and who will receive you in his everlasting arms. Trusting in the wisdom and love of an Almighty Friend, what is there in your present afflictions or future prospects to cloud the sunshine of Christian cheerfulness?

The cultivation of active benevolence is of great assistance in promoting this virtue. Selfishness is always a cause of misery, and the more disinterested we can become, the more our happiness is increased. The mind that continually dwells upon its own thoughts and feelings, will inevitably become gloomy; but, when it looks away from itself, it finds a healthful glow of satisfaction. How many, almost heart-broken, have engaged in works of philanthropy, and found, in their prosecution, that cheerfulness which they feared had for ever fled from them! The consciousness of being the instrument of good, of adding to the sum of human happiness, if only by a kind word, will drive away sad thoughts. When you compare what you deem trials with those of the poor and ignorant, you will learn to blush for your ingratitude. Education has opened to you a thousand sources of pleasure, and competence and station have given you the means of enjoying them. See what bitterness is mingled in every cup; and until you can find one with whom, in every respect, you would wish to exchange, deem not yourself unhappy. Let your life be a succession of efforts for the happiness of others, and you will never complain of being miserable.

But a habit of looking forward to our brighter inheritance is the greatest solace amidst the cares of our present condition. Who heeds the inconveniences of a wintry journey, when at its close he finds himself in the bosom of his dearest friends? How very slight should every evil appear, while the hope of that blest state remains to cheer us! "It will be all the same a hundred years hence," is a common saying; but it is not the language of Christian resignation, or founded in truth. Every trial, if improved, will help us on our way to that rest, where we hope, when ages have elapsed, we may dwell. The sainted spirits that stand around the throne, who "have through great affliction trod," will not consider as of little importance any chastening, which, by purifying their hearts, may have aided in preparing them to sing the song now swelling forth, of "Worthy is the Lamb."

Christian cheerfulness is a valuable auxiliary to Christian morals. They who witnessed that of the ancient martyrs,

were induced to seek the cause which could produce such effects; and in our day many may be thus led to the fountain from which such happiness appears to be derived. Those young persons who profess our holy religion, should engage in its duties, not as if they were tasks, but pleasures and privileges, and manifest to the world that it is their chief enjoyment, as well as their chief obligation, to worship God. The spirit of love should beam forth from their countenances, and display itself in their actions, in a kind word to the old, or a smile of encouragement to the child. Contradict, then, by your daily walk and conversation, the erroneous idea, that piety is too gloomy for the bright period of youth.

It is the special duty of woman to maintain a cheerful heart. Protected from the peculiar trials and cares to which the other sex are exposed, to her they turn for comfort and consolation. And nobly does she afford it in the time of darkness and affliction; but too often, in apparent prosperity, instead of cheering those who are annoyed with a thousand nameless vexations, she adds to their perplexities and cares. How lovely does she appear, to whom all in the domestic circle turn for sympathy in their joy, and who, with winning kindness, beguiles them from their sorrow! The little one, tottering on the floor, clears his discontented face, and breaks into a merry laugh, as he catches the reflection of her sweet smile. The poor, too, pray that God may bless her, whose presence is ever to them such a rich blessing. Cherish, then, in the spring-time of life, that cheerfulness which is the "bloom and effluence" of Christianity; and its fragrance shall be shed around your declining years, and linger, when the spirit is fled, in a sweet smile, over the face that even in death it can make lovely.

CHAPTER XXX.

CHRISTIAN DUTY

FORGIVENESS AND FORBEARANCE, SELF-DENIAL, SELF-GOVERNMENT
PRAYER.

"Wisdom is humble, said the voice of God.
'Tis proud, the world replied. Wisdom, said God,
Forgives, forbears, and suffers, not for fear
Of man, but God.
Wisdom mistrusts itself, and leans on Heaven."

ALTHOUGH happily sheltered from the rough encounter of the world, yet you may not altogether escape unkindness and injustice. Your motives may be misunderstood or misinterpreted; envy may watch you with spiteful eye; jealousy be inquisitive and quick-sighted to your faults; and malice vent itself in contemptuous sneers and calumnious words. And what are you to oppose to these hateful passions? Forbearance and forgiveness.

It was the saying of a wise heathen—"Reform an injurious person if you can; if not, remember your patience was given you to bear with him; that the gods patiently bear with such men, and sometimes bestow upon them health, and fame, and fortune." Christian morality goes farther, commanding not only forgiveness, but the exercise of kindness, towards those who have injured us; to do good to those who hate us, thus calling into exercise the noblest effort of which human nature is capable, the fulfilling of the law of holiness—"Love your enemies."

If your enemies misunderstand your motives, it matters little if they are such as you can lay open to the eyes of Him who sits as a "refiner and purifier." If you are led, by their severity, to a clearer discernment of your own motives, to a closer scrutiny into your own conduct, they in effect serve you better than your flatterers—even better than your friends. "You will form your own character, nor can your

enemies prevent it. Their calumny will injure you less than you imagine."

Injuries, real or supposed, are not to be met with a haughty and contemptuous spirit. Loathing and disdain-
ing meanness and sinfulness, avoid transferring your hatred to the beings who are guilty of them. Hatred, malice, and all evil passions, burn themselves with the firebrands they throw, poison themselves with their own deadly mixtures. They whose bosoms are haunted by these demons, should not meet with condemnation alone; they should call forth the deepest commiseration. When you can "pray for those who despitefully use and persecute you," not generally, but individually, it is the surest proof that they are entirely forgiven. The Christian's heart should bound to offer forgiveness, even to those offending ones who will not ask it. Blessed, indeed, is that spirit, which, in humble imitation of the divine Redeemer, can say, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

But not alone towards enemies is the spirit of Christian forbearance to be exercised. Such, alas! is fallen human nature, that the best and loveliest of earthly friends have their darker shades of character. We should be foolishly employed in endeavouring, day after day, to count the spots upon the glorious sun; to dwell upon the faults of those whom we love would be equal folly. Habitually to interpret their motives kindly, to make charitable allowances for their weakness, to use every favourable opportunity to draw forth their excellence, to endeavour to correct their faults by example and by advice, unostentatiously offered: this is the task of Christian forbearance.

Excessive sensitiveness to unkindness or to dislike should not be suffered to mar your happiness. This may arise from morbid sensibility, or from pride. In either case, you will be disturbed by

"A something light as air—a look,
A word unkind or wrongly taken,"

from the friends whom you fondly love; and weeks of dejection be the consequence. No better remedy can be

prescribed, than a cordial, wholesome kindliness of manner on your own part, which will most probably call forth the same manner from your friends. Practise that true Christian courtesy, recommended by the Apostle Paul, and so beautifully exemplified by our blessed Saviour in all his social intercourse. This courtesy exhibits itself from day to day, in those "thousand decencies" that give to life its sweetness. If, notwithstanding your own kindliness, you have true friends who are deficient in courtesy, their want of suavity should not alienate you; with this unfortunate deficiency, their hearts may be kind and benevolent. Habituate yourself to their unpleasing manners, and steel yourself against them; a rough rind often incloses fruit that is sweet and nutritious.

The sensitiveness that leads you to entertain suspicions of your friends may arise from pride; their neglect or apparent unkindness may have been accidental; and you must exercise severe censorship over yourself to overcome this tormentor. There is need of forbearance towards persons who differ from you in opinion. A dogmatical, bigoted spirit, will never win any one to the truth. Error may be maintained with the utmost pertinacity, even when it is seen to be error, if those who oppose it do it in an ungracious, obnoxious manner. When endeavouring to manifest your firm adherence to right principles, Christian forbearance demands that you should not "be puffed up," nor "behave yourself unseemly." To the obstinacy of error you must oppose a spirit "kind, gentle, easy to be entreated," without sacrificing an iota of truth.

The question is often asked by the young, "How can I practise the duty of self-denial?" An enlightened conscience will alone lead to the answer. The endless differences in the condition and circumstances of individuals render it impossible to offer rules that will be universally applicable. A sordid, selfish Christian! This is an utter impossibility. The very foundation of the Christian character is that love which is self-denying, self-sacrificing. A mother's love, a mother's self-denial, are often spoken of

as strong and wonderful; but this is a law of her nature: she cannot break it without becoming, in the eyes of all beings, a monster. A selfish mother! Who does not burn with indignation at the very idea! The law of the Christian's nature is love, and how can it exist where selfishness reigns!

Can He, whose whole mortal pilgrimage was a series of self-denying labours, ending with the sacrifice of his life upon the ignominious cross—can He recognize his own image in a sordid, selfish, grasping being, whose thoughts are bent upon the display of beauty or wealth, and self-glorification!

Not a single revolution of the earth takes place, without affording you many opportunities for self-denial. Vanity makes large demands upon your time and money; examine how many things, that minister solely to her gratification, you can strike off and make over to another account.

It is very trying to you to be thought less intelligent, less generous, less worthy, than you really are; still more so, to be accused of what you are not guilty. You may practise self-denial, by patiently leaving these erroneous opinions to be rectified just when Divine Providence shall afford you the opportunity; by being contented, without administering rebuke in any other way than by becoming more worthy and more humble. The Lord of glory, adored by cherubim and seraphim, made himself, for your sake, a man of no reputation; it is a small matter to deny yourself the praise of men, if thereby you become more assimilated to him in meekness and lowliness of heart. It is possible that pride is the very plague-spot in your heart, which the chastening mercy of your heavenly Father is thus eradicating, that the beauty of holiness may be perfected. Love, peace, joy, cannot maintain their kindly companionship, where selfishness wields her tyrannic sceptre. The gratification of your own taste, the exhibition of your accomplishments, and even your highest intellectual pursuits, you may be called upon to sacrifice for the good of others. If there is unity of principle in your mind, these

opportunities, whenever they occur, will call into exercise Christian self-denial. It is not alone the great occasions of life, where heroic magnanimity that will dazzle every beholder can be shown, that will test the strength of your principles. "It is easier to die like a martyr than to live like a Christian." It is easier to bestow a large amount of time and money upon a popular charity, cheered by the world's applause, than to practise some silent, simple act of self-denial from day to day, for the good of a friend, for which, perchance, you receive nothing but blame from that very friend. The mountain cataract dashes down the precipice with deafening roar, and sends up its iris-bedecked spray, exciting wonder and admiration; while the nameless little river pursues its noiseless way, imparting freshness and beauty to overhanging trees and water-loving plants, till it loses itself in the larger stream which bears its tributary waters onward to the ocean.

The task of self-government has been already commenced if you have entered upon the Christian warfare, and you find it no easy task. Precepts and prohibitions are of little avail, unless the whole soul is brought under the dominion of holiness as a governing principle. No temper is so perfectly sweet, as not to require watchfulness; there is not a sinful being in the universe, who does not need to set a guard over all the avenues to temptation. The Apostle does not say, "Be not angry;" for there are occasions when it would be as impossible to prevent the momentary emotion of anger, as it would be to stay the mantling blood, whose ready play crimsoned the cheek of wounded modesty. He says, "Be angry, and sin not; let not the sun go down upon your wrath." Anger may glance into the breast of a wise man, but it "rests in the bosom of fools."

Self-government is, of course, a much more difficult task for the irritable, the passionate, the sanguine, than for the naturally amiable. The disposition which a happy few possess resembles the climate of some sweet island of the Pacific Ocean, where no violent storms ever agitate the mild and uniform temperature; while others are like

our West Indies, where the hurricane and tornado are frequent visitants. If you possess an equable flow of animal spirits, it is impossible for you to conceive of the difficulty of restraining and controlling an impetuous, impulsive temperament. The Apostles St. John and St. Paul exemplified this natural difference in temperament. The beloved disciple must have possessed an angelic sweetness of disposition, a kindliness, and a beautiful equanimity, which rendered him the soothing, gentle friend, upon whose bosom the Saviour could lean at the social board. He maintained in old age the same characteristics; and when he could no longer write or preach the blessed gospel, his benign countenance expressed the fulness of his heart as he went about, saying, "Little children, love one another." St. Paul, fiery, impatient, and sanguine—"When he would do good, evil was present with him"—yet what fervent zeal, what self-sacrificing devotedness, what watchfulness, what fearless and persevering ardour, resulted from such a temperament, brought, by divine grace, into subjection to the law of holiness! Like an avalanche arrested in its course of devastation, and made a monument of glory and beauty upon some lofty eminence, stands the Apostle Paul. With such an example in view, let none despair. If the crown of glory is won through intensity of strife, will it be less brilliant? When it shall be cast down at the foot of His throne whose grace was sufficient aid for the final victory, will the song of "Worthy is the Lamb" flow with faint and feeble love from such a redeemed spirit? No: these are the sealed servants of the Lord, "who have come out of great tribulation;" and triumphantly joyous will be their song, when "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."

All other Christian duties will be performed with little pleasure, and with faint, remitted effort, without habitual performance of the first of Christian duties, prayer. Unless this be to you the very gate of heaven, where you delight to linger, you will not have that fulness of evidence of things not seen, which is the life of religion. Where else can you catch a glimpse of the glory of heaven, but in the

sanctuary and in the closet, where this world, with its dangerous allurements, is shut out, and the soul holds communion with its Maker and Redeemer? A devotional spirit is the best guard against temptation, and the surest pledge of fidelity to your Lord and Master. The true ends and design of prayer are, "to impress deeply upon the mind a sense of the *presence* of God, our *dependence* on, and *accountableness* to him; suitably to dispose and prepare the mind for the reception of divine favours; to draw down upon us, as the means divinely constituted, the blessings which we may from time to time need; and to accustom ourselves beforehand to the exercises of heaven."

To the altar of grace you may go, and lay open freely all your hopes, joys, desires, fears, disappointments, plans of usefulness, temptations, and sorrows. His ear is open when the morning dawns, when the sun sheds his noon-tide beams, and when night comes on, with her starry train. The exiled prophet Daniel knew this, when he knelt three times a-day to worship the God of his fathers in a strange land, in defiance of the idolatrous king who had threatened death as the consequence. You, who have no monarch's frown to dread, is there still no tyranny of fear that keeps you at a distance from the mercy-seat? Are you bowing to another idol that your own heart has set up? May conscience lead you back to the altar of the Lord your God, and his Holy Spirit henceforth be your guide and inspirer to that "effective fervent prayer which availeth much!"

CHAPTER XXXI.

CHRISTIAN USEFULNESS.

"The dews came down unseen at even-tide,
And silently their bounties shed, to teach
Mankind unostentatious charity.
With arm in arm, the forest rose on high,
And lesson gave of brotherly regard."

A MORE favourable opportunity than the one you now enjoy for usefulness, in the wide circle of benevolence, may not present itself during your whole life. Not yet encompassed by those many cares that may shut you out in a measure from this wide circle, you may now learn the luxury of doing good.

It is possible that you have fancied this period of your life would be one of dreamy leisure. The stirring spirit of the age allows not the Christian to be a secluded contemplatist. Much as there is holy and heavenly in calm retirement and lonely meditation, they cannot be indulged in freely, and for a length of time, without encroaching upon other imperious duties. There is little danger, however, that the young Christian, at this eventful era, should spend too much time in this manner; yet there may possibly be here and there an individual, feeling so strongly the necessity for habitual introspection, and the difficulty of keeping a peaceful, quiet frame of mind while mingling much with human beings as to be solicitous to preserve tranquillity by retirement. But your divine Exemplar, although occasionally retiring to a mountain for prayer, and to a garden for meditation and communion with his heavenly Father, spent his life in active benevolence. One of the old divines says: "Doing no harm is the praise that might be bestowed upon a stone." The Christian virtues are not all passive; the Christian life must be active, energetic, enterprising.

"The God of glory walks his rounds,
From day to day, from year to year,
And warns us each, with awful sounds,
No longer stand ye idle here."

If you have expected romantic excitement and interest in the circle of benevolence, you have not entered upon it with right feelings. The stimulus will soon be exhausted. Instead of the woodbine-wreathed cottage, with its neat and rosy tenants, grateful and good, the poor to whom charity may lead you will have none of these graceful accompaniments. You may find in the abodes of poverty much to disgust a refined taste; in the gross manners and vulgar ignorance of their inmates, some things to alarm your scrupulous delicacy. You may find them ungrateful, and not seldom, in our country, with that spirit of independence which sorely feels the necessity of receiving alms.

You have discharged but a small part of the duty of benevolence to the poor by bestowing money. To the sick, you may afford the ministry of consolation; you may make with your own hands, those little delicacies that their situation requires, and, while you do good to the perishing body, your gentle kindness may open their hearts to receive the more able ministrations of the appointed messengers of mercy. You may stand by the bed of death, and calm the spirit that is passing away with the blessed promises of the Saviour. Let your Bible be a constant companion in these visits. Select, beforehand, such passages as will be applicable to the condition of the poor, the sick, and the afflicted, and read to them with that solemnity and earnestness that firm faith inspires. To those in health, you may render assistance in various ways. The poor woman who goes out to daily labour may not have time for the making of her children's clothes, when she can earn them; or may not have ingenuity enough to cut them. You can often render relief in this way, where it would be deemed almost an insult to offer pecuniary aid. It is always well to encourage this spirit of honourable independence and self-respect in the poor. There is a numerous class to whom you may be useful, by seeking out employment for them. Alas! how many are driven to despair because they cannot find occupation! how many fall into vice and ruin! Benevolent societies, which on the whole do so much good, might sometimes do more

by furnishing work for the poor than by doing it for them.

There is much to be learned with regard to the manner in which you should approach those whose station in life is different from your own. Delicacy, as well as Christian meekness, suggests that a proper regard should be paid even to your dress and demeanour, when you go to the abodes of indigence and misery. The contrast is already too striking between your condition and those to whom you offer sympathy and assistance; health, competence, and cheerfulness—sickness, want, and sorrow; remember the weakness of human nature, and you will not make the contrast still more repulsive, by a gay, luxurious exterior, when you go upon errands of mercy. It may seem absurd to some young ladies even to propose that their dress, on such occasions, should be peculiarly neat, but very plain and simple; but it is hoped there are others who will deem it not beneath their notice.

In your manners, avoid, by all means, a display of condescension. Remembering that all mankind are your brethren, and that God, in his providence, has given you those things wherein you differ, go to the home of the destitute with a heart filled with fervent gratitude, deep humility, and Christian love. Your sympathy will then go from the heart and reach the heart, your gifts will be received without pain, because the giver will be loved and respected. If your manners, on the contrary, are haughty, cold, and repulsive, necessity may compel the acceptance of proffered charity, but the whole heart of the recipient of your bounty will revolt, no gratitude will be felt, toward yourself. Your manners must be gentle and kind, simple and sincere, and thus possess the dignity that will insure respect.

To the glorious efforts of the present day for the diffusion of Christianity, you may lend your aid. What cheering, what astonishing intelligence is wafted by every breeze from each quarter of the globe! China, long impregnable China, is opening her imperial gates to Christian men:

Persia, Hindostan, Greece, Africa—the whole world is missionary ground. You may say despondingly, “And what can I do !” Gain information from every accessible source, and, while you take a general interest in the missionary cause, adopt some particular object as your own, in which you will take a special interest ; for this, spare all that you can—do all that you can. By this concentration of effort, you will accomplish more than if your benevolence were entirely diffusive. Classic Greece will have peculiar attractions for some ; “the Celestial Empire” for others ; and even degraded, miserable Africa will not be forgotten. Console yourself with the words of the philanthropist Howard, “In God’s hands no instrument is weak.” Leave yourself in his hands, that he may work with you for his glory, and the extension of his kingdom. If there be but a “willing mind,” he may so employ you that at last you may receive the joyful sentence, “Well done, good and faithful servant !”

The Sunday-school affords a pleasant field of usefulness. To meet, from Sabbath to Sabbath, a class whose young affections you have gained, and into whose minds you have poured the best of all knowledge, and to see their faces brighten with pleasure at your approach, is indeed a sweet satisfaction. But it is also a solemn responsibility. These are immortals, upon whose plastic minds you are leaving an impress for good or for evil. You will need heavenly wisdom and prudence to guide you in this labour of love. It is your duty to look after the welfare of those who are thus committed to your trust on other days besides the holy day of teaching. Visit them occasionally at their homes ; endeavour to gain the good-will of their parents, and to call in their aid to deepen and confirm any good impressions that you may be enabled to make upon their children. If you do not immediately see the fruits of your labour, patiently wait for the grace of God to ripen the seeds you have sown ; and labour on, in full faith that he will, in his own good time, bring forth an abundant harvest.

All who are faint-hearted, when they consider the trifling

apparent results of their labours in the field of Christian usefulness, may be encouraged by the following remarks from one of the most powerful writers * of this or any other age :

“The state of the matter is very simple. The Superior Cause of man’s being made wise to salvation, in appointing a system of means to be put, by human activity, in operation towards this effect, has connected, certainly and inseparably, with that system some portion of the accomplishment of this sovereign good, which would not take place in the absence of such application of means ; only he has placed this certainty in the system of operation, as taken generally and comprehensively ; leaving, as to human foresight, an uncertainty with respect to the particular instances in which the desired success shall be attained. His subordinate agents are to proceed on this positive assurance, that the success shall be somewhere, though they cannot know that it will be in one case or in the other. ‘In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thy hand ; for thou knowest not whether shall prosper, this or that.’ There unquestionably gleams forth, through the plainer lines and through the mystical imagery of prophecy, the vision of a better age, in which the application of the truths of religion to men’s minds will be irresistible. And what should more naturally be interpreted as one of the dawning signs of its approach, than a sudden wide movement at once to clear their intellects, and bring the heavenly light to shine close upon them ? Let them regard as one great undivided economy and train of operation these initiatory efforts, and all that is to follow, till that time when ‘all shall know the Lord ;’ and take, by anticipation, as in fraternity with the happier future labourers, their just share of that ultimate triumph. Those active spirits, in the happier stages, will look back with this sentiment of kindred and complacency to those who sustained the earlier toils of the good cause, and did not suffer their zeal to languish under the comparative smallness of their success.”

* Foster.

These brief hints on Christian usefulness are designed merely to lead your minds to full and conscientious inquiry; the happiness of an immortal spirit cannot be found in selfish gratification.

CHAPTER XXXII.

CONCLUSION.

LETTER FROM MRS. CLARA G—— TO ISABELLA ——.

You going on a mission! You, my dear Isabella, a "single woman," going to be a teacher of heathen children? Pardon me, it makes me smile to think of it. Glad am I that your warm heart is interested in so excellent a cause; but yet—"But yet, is as a jailer to bring forth some monstrous malefactor"—but yet, allow me to say, that your education and mode of life have not fitted you for the arduous undertaking. Brought up in the lap of luxury, neither your physical nor your mental constitution renders you a suitable person to endure the trials of the missionary life. I fear it is not alone the sunlight of an awakened conscience that has led you to this decision: your fervid imagination, dear Isabella, has had much to do in the case; you must look at it with the clear eye of sober reason. Bright revealings of a future world have dawned upon you; joy and hope have sprung up, and a noble disdain of earth has for a time taken possession of your ardent mind. But, dear Isabella, the self-denying, much-enduring missionary must be clad in the whole Christian panoply; must possess stability, and firmness, and courage, to encounter hardships, danger, and death itself. If you are prepared for martyrdom, you are prepared for a missionary. Thanks be to God, few of those who now take "their lives in their hand" and go to the heathen are called to offer them up on the altar of missionary zeal; yet they have need of the very firmest faith, the most undaunted

courage; for even that last trial, if need be, may come. If God, in his all-wise providence, has not fitted you nor me, my dear friend, for this calling, which seems so glorious and beautiful, let us be grateful that there are many whom he has chosen and called—whose self-denying labours will meet their reward, we trust, on earth; if not, it is secure in heaven.

Since the death of your lamented father has left to you the uncontrolled disposal of a large fortune, you have the means of extensive usefulness at home. It will require much wisdom and piety to be a judicious steward of your Lord's bounty. Faithful, laborious, and intelligent endeavours will enable you to do as much good—I had almost said—as heart could wish; but when would the heart, touched with compassion for the woes of the human race, be satisfied?

I would not have you, dear Isabella, a visionary religionist, carried away with the romance of religion, and knowing little of its reality: there is a "fatal facility wherewith imaginative spirits pass over from the solid ground of piety and virtue, to the illusory region of enthusiastic excitement."

I know your generous nature, and believe I have not relied upon it too far in thus giving free scope to candour. My love for you, and undoubting faith in the sincerity of your motives, have prompted me to exercise freely the privilege of early and long-tried friendship.

Come, my own Isabella, and make us a visit; we will then discuss these matters at leisure. Mr. G—— joins with me in urging you to do us the pleasure without delay.

Yours, I trust, in the best of all bonds—Christian love.

CLARA G——.

ISABELLA — TO AUNT SUSAN.

You will be surprised and pleased, my dear good aunt, at the change a few weeks have effected in my resolves and purposes. Clara is the same kind, judicious friend as ever.

Her arguments, ably supported by Mr. G——, have convinced me I can do good at home. I am not yet wise and prudent enough for a missionary.

Another project of mine, of which you have not heard, they cordially approve. I will tell you the whole story. A few days before I left home, as I went into a shop in — Street, I caught a glimpse of a face that I thought was a familiar one; but it was immediately averted. The lady who thus attracted my attention was dressed in a rich but faded lilac silk, and a soiled bonnet, whose flowers were in “the sere and yellow leaf.” She had a shabby, foreign air, which led me to conclude I never could have claimed the acquaintance of such an impersonation of forlorn and faded gentility. She was making some trifling purchase; the sound of her well-known voice startled me—it was my quondam friend, Geraldine M——, now Mrs. W——. Dear aunt, I had not seen her since her marriage morning, when we parted at the church door; and you cannot conceive what a shock it gave me. Not wishing for a scene in the shop, I waited until she had completed her purchase, and then followed her into the street. She walked rapidly, so that I was obliged to call, “Geraldine! Geraldine!” She turned, and such a haggard, woe-stricken face met my eye, that I started back, about to beg pardon for my mistake, when she reassured me, by saying—“Isabella, I thought you would not wish to recognise me, and hurried away.” I held out my hand, but for a moment could not speak. We walked on together, until we came to a mean-looking house, where Geraldine hesitated, blushed, and at length invited me to walk in, if it would not be “too great a condescension.” I excused myself, saying that I would call the next day, and should have done so before, had I known that she was in town.

I had heard, some time since, of Mr. M——’s failure, and that, notwithstanding his own misfortunes, he continued to refuse to see Geraldine. I called the next day, but she was not at home; again I called, and received the same message from a dirty little servant girl, who looked at my

card as if such a curiosity had never come into her hands before. I requested our good minister to make inquiries about W——, and learn, if possible, how he supported his family. He did so, and informed me that they had very recently returned from Italy, where they had resided since their marriage, and had taken one room in the house where I attempted to call. The elegant, the splendid Geraldine M——, reduced to such extremity! They are very poor. W—— has been a dissipated gambler, but would now gladly be employed in any honest way for a support. He has been unkind too, very unkind, to Geraldine. God forgive and amend him!

And now, my dear aunt, conscience would not let me rest until I had done something for them. Through the merciful providence of God, I was spared from the fate of Geraldine. You remember my girlish fancy for W——. Rejoice with me that he never suspected it! Besides, you know I was a witness of the marriage, and in that way an abettor of Geraldine's disobedience to her parents.

I have consulted Mr. G——, and through his agency have purchased a snug little farm, with a pretty cottage upon it, which is to be secured to Geraldine. I wished not to be known in this affair; but Clara, with her straightforward honesty, insisted that it would give Geraldine less pain than to be indebted to an unknown benefactor. Mr. G—— has had the kindness to write to W—— and his wife, and (how shall I be sufficiently grateful!) they have accepted the offer with thankfulness. W—— says his father was a plain farmer, who educated him at college for a profession; but instead of reaping the advantage of a college education, he set up for a gentleman. So you see, aunt, this idea of a farm was a lucky thought. He says farther, that both Geraldine and himself will gladly escape from a place so fraught with painful associations as R——. They will be within two miles of our excellent friends, Mr. G—— and Clara. With their example and advice, what may they not become! And what a beautiful example of conjugal happiness do I behold from day to day! The most cheerful

piety adorns their life, the most active usefulness exalts it. Happy in each other's society, to fulfil the apostolic injunction, "to be given to hospitality," must cost them no little self-sacrifice. Yet they do fulfil it to the utmost. How sweet, how delightful, is their kind attention to me! Who can leave this happy home, without having been made wiser and better! Yet, believe me, dear aunt Susan, my resolution is firm. I shall emulate your goodness in single blessedness. I must have your assistance and your counsel, in dispensing "judiciously," as my much-loved friend says, "the ample fortune that the Almighty Disposer has intrusted to my stewardship." Our home, too, may be a happy one, dearest aunt,

"For in thy heart there is a holy spot,
As 'mid the waste an isle of fount and palm
For ever green! The world's breath enters not,
The passion-torments may not break its calm."

And my impulsive, impetuous spirit shall be calmed; for, with God's blessing, I will learn self-government. "I am weak, but He is mighty," and, with his holy guidance, I hope to pass safely through the world, to my heavenly home.

With all my faults, love me, dear aunt, pray for me, and expect soon to see your

ISABELLA.

THE END.

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